

PhD Programme in

# Urban Planning Design and Policy



**POLITECNICO**  
MILANO 1863

DIPARTIMENTO DI ARCHITETTURA  
E STUDI URBANI

*36th Cycle (2020)*

**3 Open Topic**  
Scholarships

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**5 Thematic &  
Interdisciplinary**  
Scholarships

**OPEN CALL**

**Deadline:**  
**29th May 2020**

# DASTU - Politecnico di Milano

## PhD programme in Urban Planning, Design and Policy

### Call for applications 2020 now open!

The PhD programme in **Urban Planning, Design and Policy** grants **eight PhD positions** to start in November 2020.

All positions are fully funded with scholarships and other benefits.

- ▶ **Three positions** allow candidates to freely choose their own research topic.
- ▶ **Five positions** are based on predefined research topics as follows:

**1. More than social housing. Potentials and challenges in the innovation and re-actualization of the social housing sector**

This position is co-financed by FEDERCASA (Italian Federation for Public and Social Housing). Academic Supervisor: Prof. Massimo Bricocoli ([massimo.bricocoli@polimi.it](mailto:massimo.bricocoli@polimi.it)).

**2. Planning trails and routes for slow tourism: Policies and models to experience landscape and reduce territorial marginalities**

This position is co-financed with resources of the Italian Ministry of Transport. Academic Supervisor: Prof. Paolo Pileri ([paolo.pileri@polimi.it](mailto:paolo.pileri@polimi.it))

**3. Cyber-capital and impact on the urban rent**

This is an interdisciplinary grant. The research is carried out in cooperation with the PhD programme in Data Analytics and Decision Sciences.

Academic Supervisors: Prof. Valeria Fedeli ([valeria.fedeli@polimi.it](mailto:valeria.fedeli@polimi.it)) and Prof. Simone Vantini ([simone.vantini@polimi.it](mailto:simone.vantini@polimi.it))

**4. Slow tourism models for the inclusive regeneration of territories**

This position is financed by the National Social Security Institute (INPS) and is reserved to children and orphans of Italian public sector workers.

Academic Supervisor: Prof. Paolo Pileri ([paolo.pileri@polimi.it](mailto:paolo.pileri@polimi.it))

**5. The city takes care of little citizens: studies to redevelop urban spaces in front of schools**

This position is financed by the National Social Security Institute (INPS) and is reserved to children and orphans of Italian public sector workers.

Academic Supervisor: Prof. Paolo Pileri ([paolo.pileri@polimi.it](mailto:paolo.pileri@polimi.it))

### How to Apply

The official call for applications, along with procedures and requirements, is available on: [www.dottorato.polimi.it/en/looking-for-a-phd/call-for-positions-and-scholarships/index.html](http://www.dottorato.polimi.it/en/looking-for-a-phd/call-for-positions-and-scholarships/index.html)

▶ **Deadline: 29th May 2020 (2pm, Italian time)**

▶ **For administrative inquiries, contact:**

Marina Bonaventura ([marina.bonaventura@polimi.it](mailto:marina.bonaventura@polimi.it))

▶ **Information about the PhD programme in Urban Planning, Design and Policy is available on:** [www.dottorato.polimi.it/en/phd-programmes/active-phd-programmes/urban-planning-design-and-policy/index.html](http://www.dottorato.polimi.it/en/phd-programmes/active-phd-programmes/urban-planning-design-and-policy/index.html)

# Three Open Topic Scholarships

## Motivation and objectives of the research

This PhD programme aims at exploring the significance and the impact of contemporary urban changes and at understanding the way they can be governed through planning, design and policy making activities.

By establishing a dialogue with the best European and International schools, this PhD programme is the place for research and innovative approaches to urban studies, spatial planning and urban design.

The PhD programme grants three scholarships financed by the Italian Ministry of University and Research. Applicants may freely submit a research proposal related to innovative topics of personal interest.

However, proposals covering the following areas are encouraged:

- Multiple institutional levels and land-use issues: the case of infrastructure.
- Coping with territorial fragility: challenges to planning theory and practices.
- Planning in the face of financialisation.
- After implementation: a retrospective research on policies and their effects.
- Architects, Engineers, Planners: how do the changing urban conditions require to redesign research and professional profiles?
- Mobility, Accessibility and spatial inequalities. Understanding and managing the deep intertwining of urban mobilities and socio-spatial transformations.
- Climate change and urban resilience. Spatial planning and ecological perspective for human well-being and for livability of contemporary city.
- New structures of spatial and socio-economic inequalities, local welfare policies and labour market, new working spaces, social inclusion and spatial regeneration: social justice, social cohesion, redistribution, social investment, sustainability, transformations in the labour market and space implications.
- Ageing in different urban/rural contexts, between autonomy and support: issues in housing, care, accessibility, mobility and social relations.
- Beyond city-ism and metropolitan-ism: new spatial imaginaries, emerging forms of agencies and the necessity of interrelated and trans-scalar approaches to governance problems in large urban regions.

### For further information:

UPDP Programme Coordinator  
Prof. Luca Gaeta, DASTU, Politecnico di Milano.  
E-mail: [luca.gaeta@polimi.it](mailto:luca.gaeta@polimi.it)

The PhD supervisor will be selected among members of the board of professors after enrollment.

# More than social housing. Potentials and challenges in the innovation and re-actualisation of the social housing sector

## Motivation and objectives of the research

The housing question gained more and more relevance during the past 10 years in Italy and in Europe. Increasing economic and social inequalities, social and demographic change, new migration flows and a labour market featuring scant and discontinuous income are affecting the social housing demand, especially in cities which face an increase of housing costs. Social housing constitutes a fundamental part of the economy of the everyday life, particularly for the lower income population. Its provision is assumed as an essential action to contrast material deprivation and to foster social protection as well as social justice. The public housing system - which in Italy corresponds to almost all of the entire social housing stock in the country and to one fifth of the total rental sector - is facing an uncertain phase which calls for a renewed and perspective vision for public action. While public housing has disappeared from the debate together with its structural funding systems, public housing agencies have undergone heavy financial cuts and privatisation of the stock.

The re-orientation and financialisation of housing policies have extensively affected policies and projects that, beyond an extensive reference to the social dimension, do not match the needs and economic possibilities of the poor. The current housing question calls for research on producing further advancement in housing studies and on the role of public housing companies in the provision of social housing. More specific focus could be: new financial schemes and partnerships to increase the stock of social housing, the development of regeneration projects integrated with innovative solutions both in terms of housing typologies and welfare services on the existing social housing stock. In the recent years, as well as in several European

cities, a renewed role of public actors is to be recorded in the development of pilot projects that have experimented new solutions in terms of planning, architecture, social organization and management.

FEDERCASA (the Italian National Federation of Public Housing Companies) and the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies are welcoming research proposals that will investigate, in a European perspective, the potentials and challenges in the innovation of social housing. PhD research projects are expected to develop: a) a critical overview of the trends and developments of public housing companies in the public arena and in the provision of housing solutions, b) a critical analysis and evaluation of a number of projects recently developed c) an international overview and critical analysis on the perspective engagement of public actors in the provision of social housing policies and projects d) a perspective vision on the challenges and priorities that have to be considered in the design and development of future strategies in order to enhance social housing and public housing companies as frontline actors in policies for social housing.

The candidate will be free to develop a mixed method approach integrating different actions and methods along the development of the project : public policy analysis research tools, for the recognition of regulatory systems and policy frameworks, revision of policy documents, maps of the involved actors, cases studies analysis; quantitative analysis of funding schemes and management approaches; qualitative analysis and representation of a user-based evaluation of implemented housing projects in the perspective of the inhabitants; an action-research approach, implying field work and qualitative research on selected cases and contexts and supporting the interaction with potential recipient and beneficiaries of the research.

### For further information:

Supervisor and Scientific Responsible of the PhD Research:  
Prof. Massimo Bricocoli, DASTU, Politecnico di Milano.  
E-mail: [massimo.bricocoli@polimi.it](mailto:massimo.bricocoli@polimi.it)

### Co-funding partner:

FEDERCASA - Federazione Italiana per le Case Popolari e l'Edilizia Sociale  
(the Italian National Federation of Public Housing Companies): [www.federcasa.it](http://www.federcasa.it)

# Planning trails and routes for slow tourism: Policies and models to experience landscape and reduce territorial marginalities

## Motivation and objectives of the research

In recent years, the strong interest for slow tourism offers the opportunity to study new forms of local sustainable development based on trails and routes and slowness. Marginal regions can reduce their rooted social and economic problems - such as depopulation, unemployment and social inequality - if a good slow travel & tourism model is proposed. Europe is improving its interest in models that are able to spread durable benefits to territories far from cities and from traditional tourism destinations. Slowness is expected to be a sustainable opportunity for territories and societies, if well planned. In Italy, the Ministry of transport and infrastructures is going to set a new (the first) national plan for cycle-routes, which will be a unique lab-opportunity even for this research time-frame. Trails and routes have to be planned together with the territories crossed by them, imaging new economies, new forms of services and new ways to involve local communities, respecting the story and the cultures of places.

Candidates are invited to investigate the combination of sustainability pillars, social objectives, economic revenues and reuse of abandoned heritage. Combining slow-route planning to regeneration opportunities is the challenge of the proposed theme.

The PhD research proposal is part of a wider research project on sustainable tourism and territorial planning that has been carried out for years in the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies of Politecnico di Milano. This department boasts among its researches the VENTO project, a tourist cycleway from Venice to Turin ([www.progetto.vento.polimi.it](http://www.progetto.vento.polimi.it)) included in 2016 in the "National system of tourist cycling routes", a national program launched by

the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Heritage, Culture and Tourism.

Through an intense work of bibliographic research with a wide international spectrum and comparative analysis of selected case studies, the PhD candidate is expected to develop a set of criteria to launch a new generation of national plans for slow tourism with a territorial regenerative ambition. In addition, efforts will be made to prepare a methodology for monitoring local and supra-local effects, for activating action plans and management plans of the territories crossed by slow tourism lines, in order to harmonizing intervention strategies with social and spatial regeneration policies.

One of the ambitions that require scientific innovation also lies in the integration of the different modalities of slow tourism within an organic framework.

### For further information:

Supervisor and Scientific Responsible of the PhD Research:  
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### Co-funding partner:

MIT - Ministero delle Infrastrutture e dei Trasporti  
(Italian National Ministry for Infrastructure and Transportation): [www.mit.gov.it](http://www.mit.gov.it)

# Cyber-capital and impact on the urban rent

## Motivation and objectives of the research

Cyber-capital is the name given to the cluster of General Purpose Technologies (GPTs) driving the accelerated digitalisation of the economy since the early years of the current century. One of the key features of this process is that cyber-capital is today an increasingly significant component in the capital endowment of advanced as well as emerging economies.

Like previous GPTs in economic history, cyber-capital has a deeply transformative impact and entails a radical reorganisation of societal and economic processes, disrupting conceptual frameworks and societal forms adapted to an economy based on the production and sale of tangible goods and physically delivered services.

Cyber-capital in the economy is bringing about new activities, assets and business models, at different scales and spatial dimensions. These technologies create a new artificial form of economic space, which is modifying the organisation of the metropolitan and urban systems, in terms of supply and value chains, labour markets, rents and options systems as well as business models. These dynamics have created in general new challenges for capital accumulation and its governance, traditionally managed by various public and private institutions within a well-established normative and regulatory framework. Among them:

1) a key actual and potential influence of Cyber-capital on economic structures is due to its in-depth and multiple impacts on urban form, flows, values and cultures. These impacts relate to disruption in the traditional organisation of physical space and establishment of virtual functions. This displacement action progressively generates new forms of urban space,

which can be described as “hybrid”. In this respect, a key mechanism for the creation, distribution and accumulation of economic value among economic agents was – and still is – land rent, with perhaps two-thirds of GDP taking place in urban areas in the industrialised world, while housing wealth still represents the main component of the financial wealth of the middle classes.

2) A second actual and potential influence of Cyber-capital is related to value creation and capture: Digital platforms provide an illustration of how cyber-capital changes the nature of value creation and capture. Platforms combine technological expertise, data and real-time information on networks and flows, particularly in the “instant economy” supported by smart devices. By accumulating data and processing power, some platform providers have achieved a dominating position and command oligopoly rents in virtual space, often at the expense of physical spatial rents linked to more traditional forms of production and distribution.

The main objective of this research project is to explore these dynamics: in order to do this, the PhD Candidate shall develop a consistent analytical and conceptual proposal, based on a highly interdisciplinary work.

The research training is supported by Data@ter, an interdisciplinary group promoted by colleagues from different disciplinary fields and departments at Politecnico di Milano in order to generate innovative and transdisciplinary approaches to contemporary social challenges and research enterprises.

### For further information:

Supervisors and Scientific Responsible of the PhD Research:

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Prof. Simone Vantini, DMAT, Politecnico di Milano.

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# Slow tourism models for the inclusive regeneration of territories

## Motivation and objectives of the research

The strong interest of recent years for slow tourism offers the opportunity to study new forms of local sustainable development. Slow tourism structured on footpaths and cycle paths creates opportunities for sustainable development in Europe, which above all affects the weaker areas, acting as a remedy to depopulation, unemployment and social imbalances. The cycle path along the Danube, for example, supports around five workers per km and generates spin-offs of around € 300,000 per km a year with low infrastructure investments (€ 200,000 / km) and low operating costs.

Also, in Italy, along future cycle paths and footpaths, it will be possible to imagine the activation of tourist services related to hospitality and the experience of local specialties, setting in motion a regeneration process. Places along the paths may experience innovative forms of heritage recovery reaching measurable social objectives and generating economic revenues for the local areas. It is therefore proposed to investigate methods and experiments of job creation of the “weak” sections of the population (people seeking re-employment, the elderly, students, foreigners, ex-prisoners, etc.) in the processes of activating new services along the routes of slow tourism. In the combination of social purposes, economic revenues and reuse of abandoned cultural heritage lies the originality of the research topic which will substantiate a replicable model to be implemented and validated. This proposal is part of an ongoing research project on sustainable tourism and territorial planning that has been carried out for years in the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies. One of the main results of this research is the VENTO cycle path project, which has been in-

cluded since 2016 in the “National system of tourist cycle paths”, a national program launched by the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities.

In anticipation of the construction of VENTO, it is important to develop new proposals for the reuse of abandoned or underutilized assets (starting from public ones), scattered along the route, which may in the future be the site of services for cycle tourists and walkers. Among these services, some may involve, by supporting them, weak social categories, experimenting with an inclusive regeneration model, not practiced to date.

On a selected tract of the VENTO cycle path, for which spatial data, knowledge and information are available, candidates should map the assets (preferably public) of an adequate size in order to planning new services for tourists. The latter are selected among the range of services required by slow tourism with reference to the most advanced and documented experiences in Europe.

Once the range of functions has been identified, it will be necessary to develop a service management model with a professional core and other activities for which social workers can be trained. Drawing on principles of corporate social development, a project capable of supporting the social reintegration of some social groups, the reuse of cultural assets, and the operating costs of the tourist service must be studied.

### For further information:

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### Funding partner:

INPS - Istituto Nazionale per la Previdenza Sociale  
(Italian National Social Security Institute): [www.inps.it](http://www.inps.it)

# The city takes care of little citizens: Studies to redevelop urban spaces in front of schools

## Motivation and objectives of the research

By dealing with the quality of one among the most crucial urban spaces for the education and development of children's personality, this research topic aims to promote solutions and techniques for the regeneration of urban spaces in front of schools. That is important for the growth of the sense of urbanity in schoolchildren, future citizens and parents.

Schools are key places for personality development. Places of learning par excellence, but also places of experimentation, of autonomy, where the sense of citizenship takes its first steps. For all this and much more, the schools are civil laboratories. However, schools are also part of a larger and more complex system: a part of the city, the neighbourhood or the country and maintains an undeniable and complex relationship with the city. The point where school and city meet is perhaps the first place where a child begins to draw a mental map of his/her experience of the city and its environment. For the school building, the relationship with the city is also an extension of its operations. The school is the place more intensely frequented by boys and girls. What children learn there deeply inspires them and will always be a reference accompanying them in their growth and life. The quality of the open spaces inside and outside school buildings helps to shape the children's behaviour and their relationship with public life and the common good. Living school time in poorly maintained, disordered, anonymous and inhospitable or, worse, degraded spaces may have a profound effect on the personality of those who will be adults tomorrow.

The doctoral research project starts from all of this, with the aim of positioning the problem through a survey and a comparative analysis

to investigate the urban quality of the spaces in front of schools.

The study of the quality of urban areas in front of schools was the subject of a pilot research project, started in 2018 (CARIPLO Call managed by two departments of Politecnico di Milano: DEIB and DASTU), which targeted an area of the city of Milan and a few neighbouring municipalities. The present proposal addresses research on a wider and more diversified geographical basis, including medium-sized towns (between 5,000 and 25,000 inhabitants) and small municipalities (with less than 5,000 inhabitants) where various types of social pitfalls threaten the educational processes of children. The research aims to select a sample of schools (primary and secondary), located in different geographical and socio-economic contexts, in order to study how to improve the connection between behaviours and environments. The essential purpose of the research is comparing different situations in order to contribute to designing new public policies for the educational sector that include redevelopment actions of urban spaces in front of schools.

### For further information:

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Prof. Paolo Pileri, DASTU, Politecnico di Milano.  
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### Funding partner:

INPS Istituto Nazionale per la Previdenza Sociale  
(Italian National Social Security Institute): [www.inps.it](http://www.inps.it)



## **How to Apply**

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► **Deadline: 29th May 2020 (2pm, Italian time)**

► **For administrative inquiries, contact:**  
Marina Bonaventura ([marina.bonaventura@polimi.it](mailto:marina.bonaventura@polimi.it))

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