

Call for Applications

PhD School, Tbilisi, Georgia

4-8 September 2023

NEIGHBORHOOD HERITAGE

Urban layers, physical environments and living communities in the post-socialist/-Soviet city

The Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT), RWTH Aachen University, Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe in Leipzig (GWZO), with the support of Ilia State University, Tbilisi (Georgia) are jointly convening the PhD School „Neighborhood Heritage. Urban layers, physical environments and living communities in the post-socialist/-Soviet City“, as part of the collaborative research project *cities.building.culture*.

We invite applications for an international PhD School aiming at exploring various approaches in the analysis of neighborhoods and their layered heritage: urban morphology, construction and perception of values, civic engagement and urban governance, local memory and place-attachment, the meaning and impact of processes such as revitalization, redevelopment, gentrification and down-grading, mechanisms of heritage protection, but also the loss and destruction of heritage. Both historical neighborhoods and more recent developments, such as modernist housing or large housing estates, are of interest.

Moreover, we would like to reflect on how the historic urban landscape approach could be applied at the level of these neighborhoods, and discuss its particular challenges in the context of post-socialist urban transformations. The districts of Tbilisi and their layered heritage will also provide a rich field for observation, discussion, and analysis, in particular during the interactive workshops that represent one of the main formats offered during the PhD School.

We would like to reflect on questions such as:

- How did the **economic and demographic changes** in the last decades impact upon the built legacy of residential districts? How are they reflected in the construction of local memory and heritage values?
- What are the **moments of rupture** in the life of the neighborhoods, and what kinds of responses have they generated at institutional and community level?
- In which ways did the **local communities** appropriate the inherited built environment and what does this tell us about processes of heritage-making from below?
- How can we conceptualize mass housing districts as heritage? Which **strategies** would facilitate a more sustainable approach for their preservation and how could communities become more involved into decision-making?

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built heritage in
post-soviet urban
development



As we consider heritage as a dynamic process, the purpose is not so much on adopting one perspective alone, but on identifying intersections between these strategies of analysis. Also, of particular interest are contributions trying to bridge theory and practice when analyzing specific case studies that demonstrate how heritage is conceptualized, perceived, negotiated, contested, or ignored in residential districts.

The contributions will be divided into four thematic sessions, according to our project's main areas of interest:

Values

Attitudes, Perceptions

Institutionalized Practices

Institutional Actors and Practices

Civic Practices

Residents and Activists.

Performing Heritage

Spatial Transformations

Morphology and Change

Places.

Format

The PhD School is designed for doctoral researchers interested in heritage studies and urban development, coming from a variety of disciplines, such as architecture and urban planning, art history, urban geography, economics, sociology, anthropology. The academic exchange will take the format of panel sessions during which students will be invited to present their research, as well as interactive workshops that would allow us to explore the diverse heritage of neighborhoods in Tbilisi. Thus, the participants will be able not only to present their research and receive feedback from established scholars, but also to interact with fellow young researchers and learn new methodological approaches in an interdisciplinary and dynamic environment. Participants will benefit from the experience of established academics from Germany and beyond and will interact with fellow young researchers. Doctoral students and early career researchers are invited to submit proposals. We encourage submissions using innovative conceptual and methodological approaches coming from various academic disciplines, bridging between theory and practice.

Fees

Attending the PhD School is free of charge. We will provide accommodation for the duration of the PhD School and contribute towards travel expenses within Europe.

Application

Please send your applications (one PDF document including the summary of your research project (500 words), your motivation for attending the PhD School (500 words) and one-page CV with contact details) to

iuga@staedtebau.rwth-aachen.de by **March 31, 2023**.

For more information on the project, please visit our website cities-building-culture.com

Successful applicants will be notified by email no later than May 1, 2023. For any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the organizers.

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