



Image: Delaney Turner, unsplash.com

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS 2025

Sustainable Innovations in Housing

Housing constitutes a foundational pillar of societies and their economies. It is an essentially *spatial* phenomenon with diverse implications regarding human needs and the environment. Its construction, development, provision, and accessibility vary widely across regions and globally – and so do its life cycles, ecological impacts, and resilience to environmental risks.

Current sustainability challenges in housing are therefore multi-faceted, typically involving at least the following dimensions:

Spatial: major disparities between urban and rural areas and correspondingly distinct problems regarding housing availability, affordability, typology, gentrification, informality, as well as accessibility of essential services, amenities, and infrastructures

Governance and planning: inertia of national/local housing regimes; power imbalances between stakeholders; lack of transparency, inclusion and collective action; outdated regulations and formal/informal divide; shortage of experimentation and learning

Ecological: unsustainable resource use of housing; negative impacts on climate, biodiversity, ecosystems, and land use; maladaptation and vulnerability to climate change; damages to physical and mental human health

Economic: rising housing costs exacerbated by higher environmental standards, labor costs, and material shortages; outdated or detrimental investment and business models; exploitative financialization and platform economies; conservative consumer values

Social: housing unaffordability, inequalities, and homelessness; intersectional discrimination and marginalization of vulnerable populations; socio-demographic change, migration, and community fragmentation; loss of cultural identity and diversity

Technological: non-regenerative housing construction and building operation technologies; limited reuse and recycling of housing stock and adoption of nature-based solutions; increasing penetration of digital technologies and privacy concerns

Against this backdrop, the **DLGS invites creative and visionary research proposals** that investigate emergent processes, novel strategies and interventions that (may) substantially alter the ways in which future housing is being conceived, provided, designed, constructed, maintained and/or used. The multifaceted challenges outlined above should be addressed with a view to create more sustainable and resilient cities and regions.

Thesis proposals must focus on one of the following key topics:

1. Sustainable housing governance and policy innovations:

How to conceive of participatory, co-creative, cooperative, experimental and digital approaches to governing, planning and/or managing sustainable housing at district, urban, regional and/or national scale?

2. Business innovations and economic instruments for sustainable housing:

How can firms and markets incorporate sustainability-oriented innovations (e. g. biodiversity regeneration, collaborative use and ownership, etc.) into housing construction and management? How can economic policy instruments promote resilient, green and affordable housing?

3. Sustainable housing design and construction innovations:

How to enhance sustainable housing by developing and applying circular technologies and building material as well as, resilient and adaptive long-term designs?

This call is aimed at excellent graduates with a Master's degree in any field of pertinence for spatial sustainability transformations, such as geography, urban/regional planning, urban/regional studies, environmental sciences, science and technology studies, transition studies, geoinformatics, civil engineering, architecture, economics, sociology, political science, or anthropology, among others.

We invite innovative applications from outstanding candidates, originating from any country, meeting admission requirements at the TU Dresden. To be eligible, proposals must

Address one of the three key topics and fulfil all other formal DLGS selection criteria:

- First Master's degree obtained in the last 3 years
- Total grade for the Master's degree "good" or higher (corresponding to German level "gut")
- Proposals must be in one or several [IOER research areas](#)
- Applicants have identified suitable supervisors (professors) at the TU Dresden/IOER
- The application is complete

Applicants are free to design the research proposal according to their particular competencies, experiences, and interests.

Interdisciplinary¹ and transdisciplinary² approaches are strongly encouraged. In order to ensure feasibility, proposals for transdisciplinary research must be linked to ongoing IOER projects in the Dresden/Saxony region (see [IOER research areas](#)), and applicants must demonstrate German language proficiency (C1 level) for working with diverse local stakeholders.

If selected, the candidates will be offered a full-time scholarship for a duration of 3 years with the possibility for extension. The DLGS scholarship amounts to 1,465 €/month (in addition to travel and research activity expenses) and is on par with the German Research Foundation’s (DFG) fellowship allowance for PhD candidates in Germany.

Application deadline:
September 1, 2024

Start of the programme:
March 1, 2025

For additional information
please contact the DLGS
Scientific Coordinator:

A detailed description of the
application requirements and
procedure can be found on
the DLGS website:
www.dlgs-dresden.de

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¹Combining and integrating different disciplinary theories, concepts and/or methods

²Co-producing knowledge with non-scientific actors throughout the entire research process

Excellence in **Spatial Sustainability Science and Transformative Leadership**

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Open to outstanding graduates
in all pertinent disciplines



The Dresden Leibniz Graduate School (DLGS) is a joint interdisciplinary facility of the Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development, Dresden (IOER) and Dresden University of Technology (TUD).



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