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This is Dresden! ➔ page 20
Mission and Goals

The Dresden Leibniz Graduate School (DLGS) is a joint activity of the Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development (IOER), and the Technische Universität Dresden (TUD). The graduate school benefits from the strength of both partners (figure 1).

The mission of the DLGS is to prepare competent doctoral graduates to perform high quality research with the focus on regional and local development strategies by providing a flexible, interdisciplinary curriculum and orientation within the research process. The DLGS doctoral candidates are seen as early stage researchers (junior researchers) who contribute to the creation of knowledge within the research areas of the IOER.

Additional DLGS goals are:

(a) to promote candidates’ research abilities in the social sciences and broaden their scientific horizon;
(b) to guide doctoral candidates in preparing dissertations, and to contribute to the efficient and time-conscious preparation of their thesis;
(c) to provide competent and critical understanding of scientific theories and research practices;
(d) to promote candidates in acquiring experience and deepening their knowledge regarding disciplinary and interdisciplinary research;
(e) to provide opportunities to gain experience in issues and methods relating to policy advice and,
(f) to foster candidates’ ability to effectively communicate their research findings to the scientific community as well as to practitioners.

Organisation and Supervision – Clear Structures and Responsibilities

The DLGS has a simple management structure with a flat hierarchy providing for inter-institutional and interdisciplinary collaboration. The organisational structure comprises of a Management Board, an Advisory Board and an Advisory Commission (figure 2).

The Management Board is the executive body of the DLGS. It is in charge of developing and implementing strategies, plans and policies, as well as managing the DLGS. It comprises of the Executive Director of the IOER and a representative from the TUD. Doctoral supervisors, as well as two representatives of doctoral candidates, may participate in the meetings of the Management Board, contribute to decision-making, and support the management of the DLGS. The Management Board is supported by the Scientific Coordinator and the Management Assistant.

The Advisory Board includes professors from European universities and outstanding related professionals. It supports the work of the Management Board and provides advice on strategic orientation and the incorporation of basic research issues. Members of the Board may be involved in DLGS curricula activities as external experts.

Each doctoral candidate is registered as a member of the IOER independent doctoral programme and thus has to comply with IOER regulations and requirements including regular presentations in front of a ‘Begleitgremium’ or Advisory Commission. The Commission is made up of at least two dissertation supervisors, an IOER senior scientist acting as mentor and the scientific coordinator. In the case of foreign participants, an advisor from their home country is involved. Advisory Commission’s members monitor participants’ achievements and results, taking an active role in guiding and training candidates to enhance their future employability.
Curriculum – Promoting Knowledge Transfer, Research Transparency and Scientific Dialogue

The DLGS organises an academic programme with workshops and lectures for its doctoral candidates to provide them with scientific knowledge, research techniques and transferable skills. Courses and workshops offer the skills required to select the appropriate methodology for performing research in a safe and ethical manner, as well as applying critical appraisal techniques. Internal and external experts raise awareness among candidates of the importance of both recognising and enhancing the skills they develop and acquire through research as a means of improving their employment prospects both in academia and on the wider labour market.

Autumn Schools are an important element of the DLGS curriculum. Since candidates come from different disciplines, autumn schools stress the value of an interdisciplinary approach, bringing together knowledge from various perspectives. Autumn Schools are organised every year as a key part the programme, providing an ideal platform for presentations and discussions on theory, research design, and results in the social sciences while also giving the chance to hone communication and presentation skills. External international and national experts are involved in this event.

The first year curriculum includes basic orientation on philosophy and ethics in science, research methods and statistics. Lectures on the DLGS research framework (sustainability, resilience and inclusiveness) are also held by members of the Management Board, to promote the transfer of knowledge between disciplines. At the mid-end of the first year a detailed and comprehensive research proposal, devoted especially to a review of the literature, a theoretical discussion, and the definition of objectives is to be presented. International and national experts take part in the proposals’ evaluation and the definition of objectives is to be presented. International and national experts evaluate the proposal and provide feedback to the candidates. The Evaluation Committee is composed of external referees (3), correspondent supervisors and one representative of the DLGS Management Board. It performs in-depth review of doctoral candidate’s progress and performance.

At the end of the year, doctoral candidates present their dissertation progress (in written and oral reports) to the Evaluation Committee. The Evaluation Committee is composed by external referees (3), correspondent supervisors and one representative of the DLGS Management Board. It performs in-depth review of doctoral candidate's progress and performance.

The final year is devoted to completing empirical (field) work and writing up the doctoral thesis, or finalising missing articles for the cumulative dissertation.

Doctoral candidates are financed by a scholarship granted by IOER for three years if they make good progress on their dissertations. The scholarship comprises of a monthly living allowance, financial support for empirical research abroad and conference attendance. Additional doctoral candidates financed by third parties may be associated and have to comply with the same procedures as DLGS scholarship holders.

Recruitment – Looking for Outstanding Doctoral Applicants

The DLGS seeks a wide range of applicants, welcoming outstanding university graduates with a master's degree from different academic disciplines. The graduate school welcomes applications from candidates worldwide who intend to complete their doctorate on a full-time basis. The application procedure is conducted annually. For details please read pages 18 and 19.

In sum – the defining characteristics of the DLGS

| Effective collaboration and networking between two recognised institutions. |
| International and multidisciplinary character promoting an interdisciplinary approach to research. |
| Doctoral candidates are viewed as early-stage researchers (junior researchers). |
| Structured programme and curriculum to guide candidates in the art and practice of scientific research. |
| Regular expert advice and permanent collaboration and discussion with other doctoral candidates. |
| Raising candidates’ research profile by promoting the dissemination of results during programme participation, e.g. at colloquia, conferences and in publications. |
| Efficient and time-conscious preparation of dissertations (3 years full-time). |

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Introduction

The Dresden Leibniz Graduate School (DLGS) is an internationally-oriented, topic-related, multi- and interdisciplinary resident doctoral initiative. Founded in Dresden, Germany, in 2008, the DLGS offers a diverse and comprehensive doctoral programme of spatial research, economics and social sciences as a joint activity of the Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development, Dresden (IOER), and the Technische Universität Dresden (TUD).

Every year the DLGS launches a call for fellowship applications at doctoral level for up to three years. Doctoral candidates organize themselves around a broad common research topic to be addressed from a multidisciplinary perspective. In its first cohort (2008-2010), the DLGS focused on “Demographic Change and Regional Development Strategies”, investigating the complex nature of demographic processes such as ageing, migration and population shrinkage which can be found in many countries and have worldwide repercussions. The second cohort (2010-2012) addressed the topic “Dealing with Change-Regional Strategies in Times of Demographic, Economic and Climate Change”. This group of candidates paid more attention to linking demographic change with other issues of long-term development such as climate change or structural economic change. The next three cohorts, DLGS 3 (2012-2014), DLGS 4 (2014-2016) and DLGS 5 (2015-2017), concentrated on the topic “Urban and Regional Resilience – Managing Change for Sustainable Development”.

Figure 1: DLGS and Sustainable Development Goal 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities

At the end of 2014, the DLGS Management Board (the executive body of the Graduate School) decided to re-orient the broad common research topic. Borrowing the ideas of the United Nations Agenda “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, the major research interest is to concentrate interdisciplinary efforts towards building more sustainable, resilient and inclusive cities and regions, one of the nineteen sustainable goals. Doctoral candidates from the 6-9 DLGS cohorts (2016-2021) investigate new concepts, policies and instruments to promote social development, economic growth as well as environmentally-sustainable urban and regional development.

Against this background, the following paragraphs summarize the discussion regarding the new development agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and its potential as a research framework to concentrate efforts to make cities and regions more sustainable by 2030. In the initial section, the transition process to formulate and define the post-2015 Development Agenda is summarized. Later, the Sustainable Development Goals are introduced, placing special emphasis on Goal 11: Making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Finally, the new major research challenges of the Dresden Leibniz Graduate School are presented and discussed.

The discussion after the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): revaluation of sustainability

The MDGs are considered a milestone in development, for which world leaders committed themselves to building a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty by 2015. Before the MDGs no common framework existed to foster international development. MDGs provided a concrete vision to support international development as well as numerical targets to monitor development progress (Higgins 2013; Fukuda-Parr 2013). Bearing in mind that no single organization is responsible for achieving the MDGs, progress was remarkable and the eight goals “brought the diffuse international development community closer together” (McArthur 2013: 1).

Despite the “quantitative success” of the MDGs, development progress has been spatially uneven and the indignity of poverty has not been relieved for all (Sachs 2012). The lack of progress can generally be attributed to unmet commitments, inadequate resources, a lack of focus and accountability, internal conflicts as well as insufficient interest in sustainable development (Kwon and Kim 2014; Fehling et al. 2013).

As the end date for the MDGs approached in 2015, the international community turned its attention to what could replace these development goals. Many argued that the post-2015 Development Agenda should remain focused on eliminating the multiple dimensions of extreme poverty, but while also addressing emerging global realities such as worsening environmental pressures, the rapid spread of disease, issues of equity and “good governance”. For instance, Griggs et al. (2013: 305) have claimed that maintaining a strict focus on poverty alleviation might in fact undermine the final purpose, as there is sufficient evidence that “humanity is driven global environmental change and has pushed us into a new geological epoch – the Anthropocene”.

During the UN Rio+20 Summit in 2012, sustainability was reprioritized as a driver of development, and UN Member States launched a process to develop a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Open Working Group (OWG) was established as an intergovernmental discussion platform. Unlike the MDGs, institutions worldwide were invited to contribute ideas about what the global development priorities should be post-2015. Finally, the OWG presented a list of 17 goals and 169 targets for adoption at the New York Summit in September 2015 (table 1).
Table 1: Targets of SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (Source: United Nations 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.6 By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.a Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.b By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.c Support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 2030 Development Agenda and the promotion of urban sustainability

While the MDG Agenda worked towards improvements in the wellbeing of individuals, the focus of the new agenda is more on preserving global public goods through, for instance, climate change mitigation and adaptation. In contrast to the MDGs, the SDGs apply to all countries rather than just to the poorest. However, the degree of each nation’s responsibility to implement the SDGs has to “be differentiated in accordance with the varying capacities, realities, and the development stage of countries” (Muchhala 2014).

As expected, the new agenda has been criticized, in particular regarding the large number of goals (Lomborg 2014), its complexity, the neglect of local contexts and the cost of achieving such a long list of targets: “Estimated at $135 to $195 billion per year for the eradication of poverty, and $5 to $7 trillion a year for infrastructure investments, the cost of the new SDGs would massively exceed the current global development aid budget” (Barbière 2015). Another concern refers to technical problems with the targets, some of which can be considered “outcomes” while others are “indicators” (Hearn and Strew 2015). Despite these criticisms, it is recognized that the New Development Agenda addresses key bottlenecks for sustainable development such as inequality, changing consumption patterns, weak institutional capacity and environmental degradation (ICSU-ISSC 2015).

With regard to urban sustainability, the promotion of sustainable human settlement development was already mentioned some years ago in the UN’s Agenda 21. There it was specified to encompass shelter provision, urban settlement management; sustainable land-use planning and management; integrated provision of environmental infrastructure; promotion of sustainable energy and transport systems, planning and management in disaster-prone areas; sustainable activities in the construction sector, as well as human resource development and capacity building (United Nations 1992: Section I. Chapter 7). However, today we continue to see urban growth in populations, land consumption and economic production, with projections showing that urbanization will be the dominant pattern over coming decades. As a reaction, a dedicated and stand-alone SDG (number 11) has been announced: “to make cities and human settlement inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”. It is also worth mentioning that whilst Agenda 21 was a top-down effort to promote environmental sustainably, the new agenda (adopted at the Habitat III world conference in Quito in October 2016) show broader scopes defined through public consultation.

The Dresden Leibniz Graduate School research framework

Adopting some of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goal No. 11 as a general framework, (table 1) the major DLGS research interest concentrates interdisciplinary efforts towards building more sustainable, resilient and inclusive cities and regions. Urban sustainability is understood as a broad concept
that encompasses social and economic development as well as environmental management and urban governance, while the analysis of resilience goes beyond an understanding of natural hazards or climate change and their repercussions. To be resilient, in the DLGS perspective, also includes strategies to prevent and recover from urban and regional distress and decline, and to cope with new social and economic challenges.

Furthermore, in contrast to traditional approaches, the understanding of urban inclusiveness includes a spatial, social and economic dimension rather than the classic perspective of physical upgrading. Finally, a sustainable, resilient and inclusive city meets its challenges through integrated approaches that combine mitigation and adaptation strategies to strengthen local capacities and foster partnerships.

Specifically, the DLGS is interested in the analysis of sustainability, resilience and inclusiveness in four fields (Table 2):

Specific research interests integrate social, economic and environmental aspects, recognizing and promoting their required interconnections to achieve sustainable development in all its dimensions. Doctoral theses at the DLGS are intended to contribute to the theoretical discussion and to methodological issues through the analysis of empirical cases.

Table 2: DLGS Research topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Economics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Inequality and the development of resilient and sustainable cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Economic policies for adequate and affordable housing in less developed countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Efficient provision of public infrastructure and public transport / understanding the political economy of public infrastructure provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 The fiscal capacity to finance inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Urban and regional development and planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Integrated policies and plans for sustainable, resilient and inclusive cities and regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Eco-cities as drivers for environmentally sustainable urban and regional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Revitalization strategies for increasing sustainable urbanization, resilience and inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Smart cities – technology and innovation as drivers for faster growth and for enhancing adaptive capacity to threats</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>3. Landscape planning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Green infrastructure policies and social integration in the informal settlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Methods for strategic environmental assessment in the urban context of less developed countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Nature based solutions for urban planning in emerging countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Offset strategies – a tool for compensating for urban impacts on biodiversity?</td>
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</table>

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<tr>
<th>4. Sociology</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Increasing social inequalities between cities and rural areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Advancing peaceful co-existence of different groups of inhabitants in cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Power relations with special focus on gender relations in public spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Gentrification and social movements</td>
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Figure 3: Keynote Lecture DLGS Autumn School 2018, Prof. Jianming Cai from the Chinese Academy of Sciences

Literature


© RV Prof. Jianming Cai from the Chinese Academy of Sciences

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DLGS Awards and Graduates

Jiaying Lin
Doctoral Candidate at DLGS

Leibniz PhD Award
3rd International Symposium on Healthy Ageing
20-22 February 2019, Berlin-Buch

1. Can you describe the event where you participated?
The 3rd International Symposium on Healthy Ageing was held in Berlin-Buch on 20-22 February 2019. It was organized by the Leibniz Research Alliance: Healthy Ageing, which consists of 21 institutes of the Leibniz Association. The goal of the symposium is to stimulate, facilitate and intensify scientific collaborations within the LRA across the various disciplines.

Researchers were invited to present their work in ageing research covering all disciplines of the LRA Healthy Ageing. There is a PhD session on the first day, when the PhD committee chose four students to talk about their results. The best talk is given the PhD Award.

2. What was the message of your presentation?
Luckily, I was chosen as one of the speakers. I presented my work under the title Healthy City Program in Shanghai – policy process unfolded. I identified the challenges created by the interdisciplinary concept of the healthy city, specifically the difficulties of intersectional collaboration at the level of local actions. To deal with this challenge, my study suggested that more communication and agreement is needed to ensure future intersectoral collaboration.

3. How do you feel about winning the Leibniz Association prize?
I was both surprised and honoured to be selected, since I was new to the Healthy Ageing community. The Leibniz Institute always stresses that we have to connect our work with society. For me, this kind of interdisciplinary event can be the first step to joining the scientific community. Also it gives the opportunity to present our work to an audience without background knowledge, so that we have to make our topic interesting and understandable. This motivates us to keep developing and communicating our work.

Patrick Opoku
DLGS Alumnus

Advisor for Academic Cooperation at Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

1. What was the subject of your research?
My thesis explored how access to land and institutions affects urban forest development. Currently, urban forestry is a topic of global interest because it can provide solutions to the severe challenges facing cities. Ghana, for example, is facing a crisis due to disappearing urban forests. Increasingly, problems in urban forestry are related to land access and exclusion as well as the lack of a clear institutional framework for governance. My thesis used the theory of access and institutions to analyse these problems and identify policy recommendations for Ghana.

2. Why did you decide to do your doctorate in Dresden, Germany at the DLGS and how important was this decision for your career?
I first learned about the DLGS programme from friends at the TU Dresden during my stay as a Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Climate Protection Programme. After the Humboldt fellowship, I decided to join the DLGS because I was impressed by the quality of supervision as well as the support offered to doctoral candidates in terms of academic writing and scientific methods. My participation in the DLGS programme 2016 to 2019 opened up several opportunities to me. Immediately after my graduation I became employed as an Advisor for Academic Cooperation in West Africa for the GIZ land governance project in Africa. In this job I provide advice on land governance issues to universities in West Africa and support postgraduate students in cooperation with the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). I want to continue my career as a land governance expert and, hopefully, become a lecturer in the near future.

3. Can you give the readers some insights about the daily life at DLGS? How did the international and interdisciplinary environment shape your dissertation project?
We often began each day by working on the tasks in our thesis that seemed particularly urgent. Depending on the day, we also had a number of other activities such as attending academic workshops, summer school and the advisory committee. We relaxed a bit by eating lunch together and celebrating the birthdays of doctoral candidates. The best thing for me was meeting people from diverse backgrounds and culture. It was particularly helpful for my work to share ideas and discuss theories with people from different countries.

4. What did you like most about your time in Dresden?
Dresden is a very beautiful city! What I liked most about my time here was the academic facilities at the TU Dresden, the long night of science and, of course, the Christmas markets.
Dresden Leibniz Graduate School (DLGS)
Doctoral Candidates 2016 – 2021

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Master of Science in Economics (DLGS 7, German)

Friederike Seifert
Master of Science in Economics (DLGS 7, German)

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### Doctoral Candidates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Degree and Specialization</th>
<th>Supervisor</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Graduates

- Doctoral Candidates: March 2019 (12)
- Graduates: 2008 – 2019 (28)

Geodata: Natural Earth 4.0, 2019
Map: DLGS, U. Schinke, IÖR 2019
Dissertation Projects of Current DLGS Doctoral Candidates

Neelakshi Joshi (DLGS 6 2016-2018)
Contextualizing urban risk governance in the Uttarakhand Himalayas: The case of Almora, India

The Himalayan region is experiencing population growth and a process of rapid urbanization. At the same time the existing government structure is struggling to provide basic services to the burgeoning urban population and does not have the financial or human resources to address urban risk. This dissertation explores how this problem can be addressed by urban risk governance rather than ‘all-of-society’ engagement. The rapidly urbanizing town of Almora in the Uttarakhand Himalayas is selected as a case study. Primary sources of data are government documents pertaining to land-use planning and building regulation, 150 household surveys as well as 24 key informant interviews. The dissertation identifies gaps in the existing government framework of land use and building regulation while arguing for the adoption of the concept of urban risk governance. However, various challenges to achieving a working model are revealed when risk governance is contextualized in the case of Almora. These are related to the local level developmental process, formal and informal actors as well as local risk knowledge. Such challenges must be resolved in order to successfully implement urban risk governance.

Hanna Kang (DLGS 6 2016-2018)
Urban transformative capacity for sustainability: The case of Eco-capital Suwon, South Korea

Korean cities face sustainability challenges through the continued growth in energy consumption and GHG emissions induced by carbon-intensive development structures. However, it will not be easy to change the pattern of energy consumption until unsustainable structures are changed. In this regard, a new urban intervention should encompass a restructuring process of interrelated institutions, infrastructure, values and culture. This process is theorized as ‘transformations’. The thesis, therefore, examines the ability of urban stakeholders to bring about such transformations, based on the analytical framework of ‘urban transformative capacity (UTC)’. The empirical study considers the case of ‘Eco-capital Suwon’, whose multi-stakeholder participatory approach displays a distinct capacity enhancement process while embedded in the centralized national system. Data is gathered by means of documents analysis as well as in-depth, semi-structured interviews. The thesis contributes to theoretical and methodological discussions on how to operationalize the UTC framework. Further, it provides empirical evidence on the critical role of inclusive governance in enhancing transformative capacity, and thereby has policy implications for urban development and planning for East-Asian cities.

Jiaying Lin (DLGS 6 2016-2018)
Interactions of actors and local institutions in the policy process – From Patriotic Health Campaign to Healthy City in Shanghai

China is confronted by huge environmental problems in the wake of rapid urbanization and industrialization. In particular, public concerns have been raised about the negative impact of the urban environment on health. Shanghai is one of the first mega-cities to initiate so-called Healthy City programmes to cope with the health hazards of urban life. Statistics confirm that improvements have been made in life expectancy and healthcare provision. However, the interdisciplinary nature of the healthy city concept creates challenges for its implementation at the local level, where collaboration across sectors is difficult. Empirical and qualitative evidence of institutional change is limited. Therefore, this study investigates the policy process through the interactions of different levels of actors historically interwoven with local institutions. The history of local campaigns to deliver national strategy is examined, specifically the Patriotic Health Campaign, which since the 1960s has striven to promote health. Document analysis and in-depth interviews show how the concept of health has evolved from a focus on sanitation infrastructure to healthy lifestyles, influencing major urban health programmes in China. While motivations and perceptions have shifted to reflect social and economic development, the national government remains the primary actor, providing incentives through a hierarchy of national awards. As actions among sectors at different levels are still fragmented, information-sharing and common perceptions of actions should be promoted for better intersectoral collaboration in the future.

Friederike Seifert (DLGS 7 2017-2019)
Overall income and within-city inequality: Evidence from a U.S. metropolitan area panel

Recent papers have studied short-run determinants of within-region income inequality in samples of several European countries. However, their results may be influenced by unobserved time-varying country characteristics. This paper examines the within-city short-run income-inequality relationship in the USA using annual panel data from 2006 to 2016. Application of a metropolitan-area fixed-effects regression model reveals contradictory correlations between changes in mean and median income to changes in inequality: An increase in mean income is associated with an increase in inequality, while an increase in median income is linked to a decrease in inequality. Top incomes appear to drive the positive mean income-inequality relationship. (Paper-based dissertation – First paper)
Diana Alejandra Jiménez-Montoya (DLGS 7 2017-2019)

Autonomy and environmental sustainability in indigenous territories in Colombia: A case study of the Resguardo El Duya

Against the backdrop of a growing global population, indigenous peoples all over the world are striving to remain in their mostly rural home territories. In Latin America, indigenous peoples demand recognition of their rights to exercise territorial autonomy, which includes decision-making over natural resources. Against this background, the dissertation aims to understand the extent to which indigenous territorial autonomy contributes to environmental sustainability. A case study conducted in Colombia comprised interviews with key actors, qualitative observations in the Resguardo and an analysis of indigenous and non-indigenous planning documents. The results give new insights into the role of indigenous autonomy in territorial environmental sustainability as well as in integrated spatial environmental planning. Further, the research contributes to theoretical discussions on the optimal design of community-based natural resource management.

Fitria Aurora Felicani (DLGS 8 2018-2020)

Bridging the gap between global aspiration to local implementation in Indonesia: A case study of Sustainable Development Goals in Surabaya City

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by member states in 2015. The implementation of the SDGs requires an all-government-approach from national to local level. This research project scrutinizes the implementation gaps of SDGs by examining the interaction between actors at different government levels in Indonesia regarding the process and operationalization of policy implementation. Specifically, Surabaya City and Urban SDG 11.7 on green open spaces are selected for investigation as a qualitative case study. The study will utilize document analysis, semi-structured interviews with relevant decision-makers and actors as well as direct observation to study the actors’ interaction for policy implementation. Findings will contribute to the literature on gaps in policy implementation. In addition, the study will illuminate the extent to which policy coherence can be obtained as well as the level of interaction between actors needed to implement SDGs.

Mengfan Jiang (DLGS 8 2018-2020)

The role of small-scale integrated urban renewal in promoting socially integrative cities in China

In recent decades, China has seen a transformation in urban renewal from the old type of large-scale rapid reconstruction to a new type characterized by small-scale integrated urban renewal. Large-scale demolition and redevelopment have not only brought enormous economic benefits but also social and environmental problems, resulting in unsustainable cities. The Chinese government, therefore, has launched experimental actions in many pilot cities to foster a more sustainable approach of small-scale integrated urban renewal. This dissertation intends to explore and describe the new type of renewal in China, examining whether and to which extent this approach has contributed to socially integrative cities. The author will review relevant literature to characterize the main features of this new type of urban renewal before conducting a comparative case study of the two (old and new) types of urban renewal. Here the model of “socially integrative urban renewal” will serve as a conceptual framework for the analysis. Empirical data will be gathered by document analysis as well as qualitative observation, in-depth interviews and a survey of urban renewal in the city of Wuhan. The results will contribute to an understanding of the evolution of urban renewal in China and the challenges it faces. Moreover, fresh insights will be generated on the new type of urban renewal and its strengths and weaknesses in promoting socially integrative cities.

Fred Nkubito (DLGS 8 2018-2020)

Urban renewal and housing constraints for the poor: A case of Kigali, Rwanda

Urban renewal policies have been regarded as a sound approach to regenerate blighted areas and revitalize the urban environment in developing countries. However, they have been criticized in the literature for undermining the livelihoods of the poor by causing displacement and loss of housing. Drawing on the case of Kigali city in Rwanda, this dissertation examines urban renewal effects and outcomes on housing for the poor and how institutions account for and respond to the consequences on affected households. In addition to a critical review of documents and field observations, semi-structured interviews are conducted with major urban actors. The results will provide a better understanding of urban renewal policy regarding strategies and forms of organization needed to make housing more affordable and accessible to the urban poor. Further, the study will contribute to theoretical discussions concerning distributive justice and sustainable urban renewal.

Nikita Sharma (DLGS 8 2018-2020)

Urban services and governance – solid waste management in Nepal: The case of Kathmandu Metropolitan City

Due to rapid urbanization and higher living standards, municipalities in developing countries face the challenge of managing the disposal of solid waste. This dissertation analyzes the reasons why municipalities still dispose of such waste in open areas and landfill. By applying concepts of governance and governmentality, the aim is to identify, examine and interpret the structure of the solid waste management system as well as the relationship among actors constituting the system. Investigating the case of Kathmandu metropolitan city, the study will illustrate how various key actors, including those from the informal sector, are perpetuating the current system of solid waste management in the city. Quantitative and qualitative data is gathered by means of interviews, field observation, focus group discussions and document analysis. The interviews and discussions are conducted with local households, municipal officials, non-government organizations, private companies and informal waste workers. Results are intended to contribute towards a better understanding of waste management in cities at a similar level of development. Additionally, the study will provide recommendations for creating sustainable waste management systems in urban areas that share similar capacities and governmental rationalities.
Why DLGS?
Insights by Board members

Bernhard Müller, Speaker of the DLGS, Director of the Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development (until 06/2019)

Professor Müller, you are initiator and speaker of the DLGS since its founding in 2008. Over time, the original umbrella research topic has been modified from “dealing with demographic change” to “sustainable, resilient and inclusive urban and regional development”. Can you shed some light on the current topic?

The current umbrella topic is closely related to Goal 11 of the Sustainable Developments Goals (SDGs). In 2015, for the first time in its history, the United Nations General Assembly directly addressed a more sustainable urban future, and more balanced urban-regional relations as future priorities on its agenda. A year later, the New Urban Agenda (NUA) was adopted by the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito and was also endorsed by the UN General Assembly. Both, the SDGs and the NUA, form the global roadmap for international debate, cooperation and action related to sustainable urbanisation during the coming decades. Whereas demographic change is ONE specific challenge of urban development, the question how we can make cities and regions more sustainable, resilient and inclusive is THE decisive challenge of our global urban future. Already now, more than 50 per cent of the world population live in urban areas. DLGS must not miss the chance to make a contribution to the implementation of the SDGs and the NUA. The high international interest in our work demonstrates that we are on the right path.

How is the topic connected with research at the Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development?

DLGS research is directly connected with the work of the institute in many ways. Like DLGS, IOER, in its research makes strong reference to the SDGs and the NUA. Environmentally sustainable urban and regional development is the core research topic and expertise of IOER. The institute also makes an input to the description of potential research fields of DLGS. In many cases, research projects of DLGS doctoral candidates are directly linked with research projects of IOER. Sometimes, they may also add a wider perspective to specific IOER research activities and contribute to opening new fields of research. Moreover, DLGS doctoral research projects are supervised by professors from IOER. In any case, IOER also assigns mentors who provide expertise and advice to doctoral candidates of DLGS on a daily working basis. All this strengthens the cooperation between IOER and TU Dresden within the framework of DRESDEN concept. More than once, joint supervision and cooperation have resulted in joint project applications and projects.

Marcel Thum, DLGS Management Board member, Chair of Public Economics, Faculty of Business and Economics, TU Dresden

Professor Thum, since the founding of the DLGS, you are representing the TU Dresden in the DLGS Management Board. What makes the DLGS unique, and worth to be considered?

Most doctoral candidates conduct their research within a faculty. The doctoral candidates in a typical faculty deal with a large diversity of topics but they share the same subject-specific approaches. They hardly ever come into contact with alternative views from other disciplines. This is completely different with DLGS. Here, all doctoral candidates share the same overall topic “Sustainable, resilient and inclusive cities and regions” but approach it from different angles. Of course, the methods and approaches are still subject specific. However, as each DLGS doctoral candidates interacts with fellow students and supervisors from other disciplines, the research output becomes much more multifaceted.

The DLGS is looking for “excellent applicants”. What does this mean concretely?

To benefit from the interaction with other disciplines and to complete the thesis within the three years of the scholarship you have to be well versed in your own discipline. DLGS can support its doctoral candidates in terms of academic writing and advanced methods, but the candidates have to bring a solid knowledge of their own discipline.

Are there special requirements for doing a doctorate at the TU Dresden?

As an applicant, you have to keep in mind that – despite the multidisciplinary environment at DLGS – your thesis is submitted at one of the faculties of TU Dresden, which have slightly different regulations. In economics, for instance, we have a weekly seminar with all doctoral candidates where we discuss the ongoing research. During the admission interviews, we discuss the specific requirements with each candidate. We suggest an appropriate supervisor and faculty with respect to the candidate’s earlier degrees and proposed research topic.
Simon Joss, DLGS Advisory Board member, 
Chair of Science & Technology Studies, 
University of Glasgow, UK

Richard Lorch, DLGS Advisory Board member, 
Editor-in-Chief of Buildings & Cities journal

Professor Joss, you are director of the University of Westminster’s Graduate School. We are glad to have you as member of the DLGS Advisory Board. What do you see as main differences between doing a PhD in the UK and Germany?

From a historical perspective, there is certainly a close relationship between doctoral research degrees across Europe and beyond. One hundred years ago, in 1917, the PhD was for the first time formally recognised in Britain as a university degree. However, the ‘doctorate of philosophy’ in its modern form first emerged in Germany in the 17th century. Doctoral degrees across universities and countries are all characterised and judged on the basis of what is referred to as original knowledge contribution. Originality of research is thus the key defining feature of doctoral degrees, and this applies as much to TU Dresden (and the DLGS) as it does to my university, and for that matter to any other university with PhD-awarding powers.

Which are the latest developments in graduate level education and how are they shaping the programme offered by the DLGS?

Increasingly in recent years, the doctorate has evolved considerably; and this is where we may be able to observe some differences between, for example, the doctorate in Germany and Britain. I would like to highlight three significant developments, in my country at least: First, we have seen a proliferation of doctoral degree types, which now also includes PhD by Publication, PhD by Distance Learning, PhD by Practice and Professional Doctorates, among others. I personally welcome this development, as it provides new innovative routes towards gaining a doctorate; and I do not share the pessimistic view that this ‘waters down’ the value of the doctorate, so long as quality assurance is preserved. I believe this proliferation is not (yet) as common in Germany. Second, in the UK there is now much more emphasis on equipping doctoral candidates with relevant ‘transferable skills’; this on the grounds that over two thirds of doctoral graduates end up pursuing careers outside academia. To this end, for example, my university has in recent years heavily invested in our innovative Doctoral Researcher Development Programme. I understand similar developments are afoot in many German universities, including in Dresden where doctoral candidates are actively supported by the Graduate Academy. Finally, research ethics and integrity have assumed an ever more central role in doctoral research, as public expectations between, for example, the doctorate in Germany and Britain. One hundred years ago, in 1917, the PhD was for the first time formally recognised in Britain as a university degree. However, the ‘doctorate of philosophy’ in its modern form first emerged in Germany in the 17th century. Doctoral degrees across universities and countries are all characterised and judged on the basis of what is referred to as original knowledge contribution. Originality of research is thus the key defining feature of doctoral degrees, and this applies as much to TU Dresden (and the DLGS) as it does to my university, and for that matter to any other university with PhD-awarding powers.

What is your opinion regarding the current research topic of the program (Making cities sustainable, resilient and inclusive)?

Since some years you are member of the DLGS Advisory Board. What makes DLGS unique?

DLGS is a lively, stimulating place to do research. First and foremost, it is the rich capabilities of PhD researchers themselves. They bring diverse perspectives and experiences coupled with a deep, rigorous curiosity. This creates strong peer interactions so they can situate local concerns within a broader international context. The sharing of these ideas and the positive, supportive environment make the DLGS experience very productive and fertile. Many formal and informal academic processes encourage exchange – this means PhD researchers are exposed to a variety of ideas so their work is responsive to a much larger international context of planning, sustainability and public policy.

Second, DLGS offers the opportunity for researchers to interact with many international experts. In addition to specific supervisors, the wide array of disciplines that help to shape a PhD candidate’s work is unique. Abundant opportunities for PhD researchers exist to present ideas and works progress to an array of experts from disciplines such as economics, ecology, sociology, planning, engineering, architecture, landscape engineering, geography, etc. Their active participation, feedback and insights enrich and strengthen the research process and outcomes. The atmosphere of these exchanges is positive, constructive and encouraging. Third, DLGS creates a community of researchers who develop a deep understanding of policy contexts and the application of research to policy and practices. This grounding in policy literacy and practice is a vital aspect for PhD candidates. After they leave DLGS, they are well equipped to work with and influence the policy makers, regulators and many others who shape our societies and cities.

What is your opinion regarding the current research topic of the program (Making cities sustainable, resilient and inclusive)?

This research topic embraces an extremely urgent and critically important set of issues that society, governments and non-governmental organisations are currently facing. The casting of the research topic in this way recognises the multiplicity of issues that feed into each other – I find the DLGS approach holistic and aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Moreover, the programme addresses these questions at several different scales (neighbourhood, city, region) and different aspects of economic, ecological, social and human development.

The transdisciplinary approach that DLGS researchers use is extremely valuable for understanding the multiple perspectives that influence the evolution of our cities. The resulting research design and evidence are compelling. It is very encouraging to see that after completing their PhDs, DLGS graduates actively put their ideas into practice (in government, NGOs, consultancies, etc).
Dissertation Projects in Focus I

Contextualizing urban risks governance in Uttarakhand Himalayas:
A case of Almora, India
by Neelakshi Joshi, DLGS 6

At a global level, unplanned urbanization is emerging as a key driver of risk due to the related problems of sprawl, pollution and environmental degradation. One fallout of this rapid urbanization is the widespread growth in informal settlements on dangerous terrains previously regarded as unsuitable for human habitation such as floodplains, swamps and unstable hillsides. The problem is further compounded by climate change, with extreme weather events more frequently affecting urban centres. Clearly, rapid unplanned urbanization on dangerous terrain in an era of climate change is a pressing research and action agenda. Various countries in Asia and Africa are especially vulnerable to the three forces driving urban risk, namely, disasters, climate change and rapid urbanization. One case in point is the State of Uttarakhand in the central Himalayas, which is undergoing a period of fast urban growth (Figure 1 and 2). Already susceptible to natural hazards such as earthquakes and landslides, this region faces an increased risk of extreme weather events due to climate change. Here urban development is unplanned and does not address measures to reduce the risk of disaster. Existing governance structures are struggling to provide basic services to a growing number of urban residents and hence do not have the capacity to consider urban risk. Rapid urban development and population concentrations in areas of high geographical risk with weak or non-existent land-use controls and building regulations are indicative of a weak system of government. Such a constellation of problems calls for an all-of-society engagement. Here the concept of urban risk governance is explored as an alternative entry point to addressing the problem.

Urban risk governance pertains to the many ways in which multiple actors, individuals and institutions (both public and private) deal with risk. The concept of risk governance arose out of the recognition that the functions of disaster risk reduction, formerly carried out by government entities, are now dispersed between a diverse set of private actors and groups. Urban risk governance offers an actor-centric approach towards addressing the physical problem of risk. It marks a shift from institutional or legislation-centric disaster risk management and disaster risk reduction practices to placing them in a specific societal framework. In so doing, it borrows from the concept of governance, which in turn was born out of the trend towards the ‘hollowing of the state’. This means that roles and responsibilities formerly carried out by state actors must be redistributed. However, the concept of governance should be understood in the development context in which it is rooted. While governance is the inevitable consequence of neo-liberalization in certain developmental scenarios, in others it is the result of the state failing to meet its required functions, so that other actors must step in to fill the vacuum. This collaboration can be achieved by a wide range of legally-binding arrangements or voluntary coordination.

There are several prerequisites to the implementation of the concept of governance, namely sufficient human, financial and technical resources as well as institutional means. These are all absent or severely constrained in low- and middle-income countries. To contextualize urban risk governance in this developmental scenario first requires an understanding of the existing development process. Next,
it is necessary to identify the human resources and social capital present within a city, i.e. the actors involved, their roles and responsibilities as well as their interrelationships. Finally, the multiple actors’ knowledge of risk is analysed to establish their conceptualization of risk and to identify entry points to address disaster risk reduction. This dissertation adopted a single case study approach in order to contextualize urban risk governance in the Uttarakhand Himalayas. The rapidly urbanizing town of Almora (Figure 2) was selected for analysis due to its average population size and the absence of a land use plan. The three primary sources of data were government documents pertaining to land use planning and building regulation, 150 household surveys and 24 key informant interviews (Figure 3). Cross-checks of multiple data sources were employed to validate the research data.

Urban risk governance, contextualized in the urban planning process of Almora, was found to be non-cyclic in nature with transversal engagement among formal and informal actors. Non-cyclic governance puts multiple actors, especially informal actors, in a blind spot regarding risk governance. Furthermore, many actions to address risk were found to be one sided, i.e. there was a lack of reciprocity. This one-sided relationship serves to undermine these efforts in the long run, especially amongst non-state actors. Finally, actors were found to possess diverse conceptualizations of risk. There were gaps in both the top-down scientific knowledge of building regulations as well as the bottom-up knowledge of risk rooted in everyday development practices.

The dissertation concludes by acknowledging the need to address rapid and unplanned urban development in the Uttarakhand Himalayas. Gaps are identified in the existing government framework of land use and building regulations. A case is made for a shift towards the concept of urban risk governance in order to ensure an ‘all-of-society’ engagement. However, the contextualization of risk governance in the case of Almora reveals challenges to achieving a working model for risk governance due to limitations in local development processes, formal and informal actors as well as local knowledge of risk. Successful urban risk governance can only be achieved if these challenges are overcome.
Dissertation Projects in Focus II

Urban transformative capacity for sustainability: The case of Eco-capital Suwon, South Korea

by Hanna Kangi, DLGS 6

The research starts with an understanding of cities as the critical geographical unit in which opportunities for change result from a concentration of transformative actions such as infrastructure and technology, knowledge and expertise as well as policy. More crucially, such transformative forces cut across multiple socio-cultural, political, environmental and economic dimensions, whereby interaction processes provide the potential for ‘structural realignments’ (conceptualized here as ‘transformations’). Drawing on this understanding, the research adopts an analytical framework of ‘urban transformative capacity (UTC)’, defined as the collective ability of stakeholders involved in urban development to bring about path-deviant change towards sustainability within and across multiple structures (Wolfram, 2016). Drawing on contributions from various research areas, 10 interdependent key components of UTC have been identified (C1-C10) (Figure 1).

Using the UTC framework as an analytical tool, the research examines the real-world urban development of Suwon, South Korea, a pioneering city that has endeavoured to transform its industry-driven development into a more sustainable urban structure through a transitional policy called Eco-capital. The city’s multi-stakeholder participatory governance diverges from the dominant government-led planning practices typically employed by South-east Asian countries. Here the distinct dynamics and forms of stakeholder interactions among various sectors (the public and private sector, civil society and citizens) as well as political-administrative levels (urban, national, international territories) are examined qualitatively by means of document analysis and semi-structured, in-depth interviews.

Located in the north-west of South Korea, Suwon is the capital of Gyeonggi-do, the country’s most populous province, which surrounds the national capital Seoul (Figure 2). Suwon is one of the most densely populated municipal-level cities with 1.2 million residents (9.3 % of Gyeonggi-do’s population) on a land area of 121 km². This gives a population density of more than 10,000 people per km². In 2010 the new administration of Mayor Yeom declared the city’s vision to become the ‘Eco-capital’ of the country by reducing emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) by 40 % to the year 2030 (compared to the level in 2005), working across 8 strategic action domains (16 projects). In order to analyse the ‘decisive’ transformative capacity (C1-C10) employed in the Eco-capital, 3 projects from different domains were selected for analysis, each with a different sectoral participation: Rain-city for rainwater management, EcoMobility for low-carbon transport, and Citizens Solar Energy (CSE) for solar energy generation.

The findings from the analysis identified 3 decisive capacity factors. First, political leadership (C2) is critical to making policy decisions on drastic change (towards sustainability) as well as to mainstream transformative policy across political-administrative levels (C10). The leadership of Mayor Yeom has not only integrated the transformative vision of urban sustainability into the policy realm, but also disseminated local transformative knowledge and practices into regional/national/global arenas by establishing trans-urban networks for sharing and mainstreaming. However, we note that the process of urban transformation can be impeded by a change in political leadership. This is a particular concern in view of mayoral term limits.

Such time limitation has motivated the Yeom administration to attempt a range of experiments in inclusive and participatory governance. This leads to the second implication that the formation and empowerment of Communities of Practice (COPs) (C3) are a prerequisite to building leadership (C2) from diverse sectors (public and non-public) and scales (urban and neighbourhood), in which the public sector plays a pivotal role. A range
of policy programmes has been created with the aim of empowering individual citizens and residents, especially through the Neighbourhood Community Renaissance (NCR) programme. Established NCR resident groups, with knowledge and experiences gained from annual NCR projects, have developed a solid foundation for community-based experiments in diverse action domains, including: household/community gardening using rainwater (Raincity) (Figure 3), neighbourhood-based car-free days (EcoMobility), as well as household/community solar energy generation (CSE).

Lastly, inclusive governance and intermediation (C1) can help improve transformative knowledge (C4/C5/C8) of diverse stakeholders and diverse forms of stakeholder interaction (C9) for a wide range of transformative experiments, primarily through NCR (C6). In particular, CoP experimentation (C6) is fostered by the commitment of the public sector (local government, intermediaries) to not only empower communities for CoP formation (C3) but also arrange constructive (regulatory, financial, and organizational) foundations as well as provide practical (on-site) intermediation for CoP activities (C7). In South Korea’s centralized political system, the national government and its ministries have played a critical role in establishing an enabling environment (particularly regarding legislative and financial aspects) for urban transformative actions, and also in cooperating with the local government to make site-specific adjustments.

From the above findings, it was possible to draw the conclusion that ‘inclusiveness’ within governance and actor networks plays a decisive role in developing other components of transformative capacity, including CoP empowerment/experiments, transformative knowledge and agency interactions. Specifically, the ‘public sector’ (local governments, intermediaries) is seen to play a critical role in promoting leadership from diverse sectors, particularly regarding CoPs at the urban and neighbourhood scale, by providing institutional and organizational support. Here the aim was to empower CoPs to be able to autonomously initiate and perform activities outside of the NCR programme, motivated not only by knowledge and experience gained and the establishment of networks (with the public sector and among CoPs), but also by feelings of pride and ownership towards their actions.

Reference

Applying to DLGS

Who should apply?

We are looking for excellent graduates who hold an M.A., M.Sc. or equivalent degree in Spatial Planning and Development (including City and Regional Planning, Landscape Planning), Economics, Sociology, Geography or Environmental Sciences. Applicants from other disciplines are welcome if they are able to convincingly relate their area of interest to the DLGS research lines and topics (see page 4-7 of this magazine). Applicants should have written a Master’s thesis.

DLGS doctoral candidates have a diverse cultural and disciplinary background, are different in age and experiences. However, what they all have in common is:

- An intense desire for researching and understanding issues of sustainable development in different cities and regions of the world;
- A big amount of enthusiasm, a high level of self-motivation and personal responsibility;
- A commitment to improving themselves, their environment and the world;
- The ability to communicate effectively across cultures and disciplinary boundaries;
- A high level of adaptability and resilience;
- Advanced written and oral English skills;
- A strong orientation to community, a positive attitude and a collaborative spirit

Admission process

Do you feel addressed? Please visit the web page of the DLGS:

www.dlgs-dresden.de

The web page provides practical tips for using the online application portal and submitting your application. Before starting an application, please read all the important information, including the information on:

- Research topics (downloadable pdf file)
- Academic and professional qualifications, English proficiency, proposal requirements (FAQ list)
- Required application materials (checklist – see also page 19 of this magazine)

The annual application period is from mid April to mid September. During this period, an online application portal is activated and can be accessed at the web page. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

Three insider tips for the success of your application

Bernhard Müller, Speaker of the DLGS:

I recommend to apply with a convincing project proposal. The core criteria for selection and acceptance of DLGS dissertation projects are that proposals are:

- Well-elaborated,
- Relevant,
- Manageable,
- Appealing.

Sara Al Nassir, DLGS Alumna:

Your research topic is your key selling point. Have a question in mind and a mental picture of the sort of answer you would provide. If invited for an interview, make sure you implement the received recommendations. Finally, don’t be scared of change.

Marcel Thum, DLGS Management Board member:

Surprise the admission committee! Many applicants pick an important policy field, say environmental hazards in metropolitan areas of developing countries, but seem to forget that decades of research in this field have already generated a vast amount of academic knowledge – there is just a lack of successful policy implementation. An application has to show both originality and state-of-the-art knowledge of the academic discourse. If you want to succeed with your application show first that you know the current research frontier and identify a research question that has not yet been researched in depth. In the best case, you come up with an innovative question and an idea how to tackle this question with up-to-date methods.
Selection process

The selection of doctoral candidates starts with the end of the application period. All applications will be reviewed, including academic transcripts and research proposals. Applications meeting the DLGS criteria progress to the next stage, where the applicant is invited to take part in Skype interviews with the members of the DLGS Selection Committee and a potential supervisor from the TU Dresden.

The calendar guide is intended to give an overview of the selection process for a DLGS doctoral fellowship*:

Early to mid-October of the year of application

Applicants will be informed by email if their application has successfully progressed to the next stage. Successful applicants will be asked to take part in a Skype or telephone interview. Guidelines will be provided on how to prepare for the interview.

Early November to mid-December of the year of application

The DLGS Selection Committee will inform applicants of the outcome of the first interview. Successful applicants will then be invited to take part in a second Skype or telephone interview in November or December. The Selection Committee will contact the referees named by applicants for additional information. The relevant faculties of the TU Dresden will verify whether specific academic requirements have been met.

January of the following year

Applicants will be informed of the final outcome of the selection process. The DLGS Selection Committee will contact candidates directly via email with an offer to take part in the programme. Upon receiving notification of acceptance, the Selection Committee will send a letter confirming the place on the graduate programme. DLGS officials will guide new doctoral candidates through the matriculation procedure at the TU Dresden.

March 1st of the following year

Successful applicants will start the DLGS programme at the TU Dresden/IOER.

* The DLGS Selection Committee reserves the right to amend the selection process, including the introduction of additional stages.

Contact

For questions about the content of the programme, please call the DLGS Scientific Coordinator, Dr. Paulina Schiappacasse, under +49 (0)351 463 37891 or preferably, email her at paulina.schiappacasse@tu-dresden.de

For any technical questions regarding the application procedure, please contact the DLGS Office: dlgs@ioer.de

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Checklist for your application:

- **Research proposal**
  - Related to the announced research topics
  - Max. length: 13 000 characters incl. blank spaces
  - No tables and figures are allowed

- **Summary of your Master’s thesis**
  - Max. length: 3 000 characters incl. blank spaces

- **Motivation letter**

- **List of publications**

- **2 Referees**
  - State just name and contact
  - No reference letters are required at time of application

- **Certificates in higher education (Bachelor’s and Master’s degree)**
  - All documents in a language other than English or German must be officially translated.
  - Electronic/scanned versions of original documents; certified true copies of all documents are required to be sent at a later stage of application.

- **Evidence of English proficiency (TOEFL or IELTS scores)**
  - Applicants who are citizens of countries where English is an official language of instruction (recognised by DLGS) or have academic qualifications from these countries are exempt from the English language proficiency requirement.
This is Dresden!

Mengfan: Dresden is a city that I will definitely fall in love with: great landscape provided by Saxon Switzerland and Elbe river, museums and historical heritages.

Hanna: The more I get to know Dresden, the more I get to love it.

Fahim: The environmental awareness, civic sense and quest for sustainability in Dresden restored my faith in the earth’s green future.

Diana Alejandra: Dresden is a very comfortable place to do a doctoral degree, with great academic offer, beautiful surroundings and everything you need at hand.

Fred: The eye-catching architectural beauty, Elbe and greenery landscapes all make Dresden so spectacular!

Jiyoon: Walking along the Elbe river with beautiful historic city views makes me happy.

Fitria Aurora: The city has many things to offer, from urban life to nature, highly connected public transportation.

Neelakshi: A gem on the Elbe. A perfect place to work and live.

Directions for reaching DLGS
The DLGS is located at the eastern part of the campus of TU Dresden at August-Bebel-Str. 30. From Dresden Main Station you get to the location in 10 minutes using bus no. 66, tram no. 9 or 11. The Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development (IOER) is situated very close (in a walking distance). DLGS doctoral candidates interact with scientists and students of both institutions and use facilities there (e.g. libraries, canteens).

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Dresden Leibniz Graduate School
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