



**POLITECNICO**  
MILANO 1863

## **Supervisor Expression of Interest MSCA - Marie Sklodowska Curie Action - (PF) Postdoctoral Fellowship 2024**

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**Link “Pagina docente”:**

**Department Name: DASTU**

### **Research topic:**

#### **MSCA-PF Research Area Panels:**

- ECO\_Economic Sciences
- ENG\_Information Science and Engineering
- ENV\_Environmental and Geosciences
- LIF\_Life Sciences
- MAT\_Mathematics
- PHY\_Physics
- SOC\_Social Sciences and Humanities
- CHE\_Chemistry

#### **Brief description of the Department and Research Group (including URL if applicable):**

The **Department of Architecture and Urban Studies, (Dipartimento di Architettura e Studi Urbani - DASTU)**, is a structure of thematic and interdisciplinary research established in January 2013, with a permanent research staff of 174 professors and researchers. It is among the Italian departments selected and funded by the Italian Ministry of University and Research (MIUR) from 2018 to 2022 within the “Excellence Departments” (L. 232/2016), the Excellence funding has been confirmed for 2023-27.

The Department carries on research in the fields of architectural and urban projects, spatial planning and territorial governance, urban policy, conservation and intervention on heritage and natural environment, historical and critical interpretation of architecture, city and territory., and on the transformation, care and government of historical and contemporary settlements and landscapes. Based on principles of environmental, social and economic sustainability, it approaches urban contexts, local projects and rooted urban practices.



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**TITLE of the project: Just Cities in the Digital Era. Planning Tools in  
Hybridsapes**

**Brief project description:**

The project proposal aims at exploring how *models of urban justice*, which in the Twentieth century have been essentially based on the *equal spatial distribution of services and accessibility opportunities*, can be *imagined and redesigned* in the contemporary era, in which the inhabited spaces tend increasingly to be a *complex mix between spaces in the digital and in the physical spheres*, hybrid spaces or *hybridsapes*.

Cities and urban regions have been centre-stage in the debate about inequalities and social justice during the Twentieth century, and they still are today, due to the extreme concentration, polarisation and acceleration they impose to social and economic phenomena. Meanwhile, the type of spaces people inhabits have been changing with ever-growing speed: in the digital era we inhabit *hybrid spaces*, formed by *complex mixes of physical spaces, and of the digital ones* that host our daily lives and activities. This makes such hybridsapes crucial, but very difficult to understand, deconstruct and analyse as *complex and multi-layered socio-technical systems*, as far as their implications in terms of social interaction, dynamics of inclusion and exclusion and forms of differentiation and inequality are concerned.

The main objective of the research will be to *reflect upon and identify the possible paths to more just cities in the digital age, and on what the concepts of justice, fairness, equality, and citizenship rights may mean in hybrid urban landscapes*. The research project thus aims to identify the lines of inequality and the possible paths to more just and fair urban environments, considering their increasingly hybrid nature, and the difficulties related to their under-explored nature and to the inapplicability of model of equal (spatial) distribution experimented in urban planning and policies in the past century.

The guiding research question is therefore if the model of equal spatial distribution of goods and services, of physical accessibility and of equalizing opportunities for all citizens through spatial means is still valid and effective today and if it will be valid and effective in the future, in which the progressive mixing of the physical and digital spheres will increase in intensity and speed.

In turn, this main research question can be broken up in two main specific questions:

- What are the *hybridsapes* in which we live? Which are the main emerging characters of the hybrid physical and digital spaces that characterise urban life and in which contemporary citizens live in? Which are the main differences with the physical organisation of inhabited spaces which characterised the past decades?
- Which elements of the equal distribution mechanisms in place in Twentieth century cities are still valid, and *which parts of the model of equal spatial distribution* can still be effective in making opportunities for all more equal in the digital age? *Which different models may be imagined* guaranteeing that inequalities will not be increasing in hybrid spaces in the future?

The expected outcome of the research is *twofold*: from a scientific point of view, *it will contribute to the exploration and a better academic understanding of the evolving landscape in which the physical and digital worlds intersect*; from a societal point of view, *the project will explore possible lines of action, strategies and tools to tackle such emerging inequalities, both old ones persisting in the hybrid sphere, and new ones emerging in them*.

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