

ARCHITECTURE UNLOCKS NATURE

European Research Conference on Design and Ecological Transition



The voices of Urban Nature, Floriade 2022, Photo by the Curators

CALL FOR ABSTRACT

Architecture Unlocks Nature is an international conference that will take place on **January 24, 25 and 26, 2024** at the Politecnico di Milano.

This conference aims to gather contributions from European researchers and Ph.D. candidates interested in exploring how different viewpoints in architecture address the ecological transition.

By exploring both theory and practice, the intent is to provide a European overview of the field of design and the various standpoints in academic research today.

**What are the roles of Design and Nature today?
How do they engage with one another?
How does ecological transition become a spatial matter?**

How are architecture, landscape and urban design contributing to, and being influenced by, this change?

SUBMISSIONS

Please send the files to the email address

architectureunlocks@gmail.com

NEW deadline for the submission: 27 November 2023

Provide one PDF file with the following information:

- TITLE OF THE PROPOSAL (max 150 characters)
- AUTHOR (Name Surname, University Affiliation, E-mail)
- SHORT BIOGRAPHY (max 300 characters)
- ABSTRACT (in English, max. 2000 characters, spaces included, references and bibliography excluded)
- IMAGES (minimum one, maximum three images representative of the proposal, at the end of the text)

**Communication of acceptance:
15 December 2023**



The theoretical background of the conference is based on the outcomes of the *EAAE Charter on Architectural Research*, which emphasises the importance of SDGs in reflecting on how the climate crisis and the ecological transition impact space. Also the work carried on by the *New European Bauhaus*, which focuses on the same topics from a European perspective, is taken into consideration to discuss the role of architecture in ecological transition.

To expand on these themes, the conference will focus is on how architecture unlocks nature and will highlight best practices as well as the ambiguities of the discourse about nature in contemporary architectural practice. Using this framework the conference is looking for contributions which inquire into how architecture and research can, as the *EAAE Charter* states, «understand, explain, anticipate and influence the consequences of these changes», and which explicitly investigate, among others, themes like the typological implication of nature, biodiverse environments and their care, social access and the right to green spaces.

The aim is to gather voices that are able to critically reflect on the relationship between project and nature, to explore and redefine architecture's role and its theoretical implications for ecological transition.

Contributions can include, among other themes, theoretical research, presentation of best practices, design-driven reflections, and exploratory research.

Which projects, conceptual frameworks, cultural implications and critical positions are important in the current design panorama? Which new possibilities open up an experimental field in research and practice?

How is academic research addressing the necessary ecological transition, and how are young European researchers addressing it?

REFERENCES

- Gandy M. (2022). *Natura Urbana. Ecological constellations in urban space*. London: The MIT Press.
Graham, J. and Blanchfield, C. (2016). *Climates: Architecture and the Planetary Imaginary*. Zurich: Lars Muller Publishers.
Gissen, D. (2019). "NATURE." *AA Files*, no. 76: 126–29.
Morton, T. (2009). *Ecology without nature: Rethinking environmental aesthetics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Leveratto, J. and Rocca, A. (eds.) (2022). *Erbario. Una guida del selvatico a Milano*. Milano: Mimesis Edizioni
Till, J. (2023). "Architecture criticism against the climate clock". *Architectural Review*, April 2023, pp. 6-10.
Turan, N. (2019). *Architecture as Measure*. New York: Actar Publisher.

CURATORS

The conference is organised by
Silvia Mundula
Kevin Santus
Sara Anna Sapone
Ph.D. Candidates in Architectural Urban
Interior Design (AUID), Department of
Architecture and Urban Studies (DASU)
at the Politecnico di Milano

OPERATIONS

The conference operations are aided by:
Thomas Cabai
Andrea Foppiani
Davide Montanari
Michele Porcelluzzi
Ph.D. Candidates in Architectural Urban
Interior Design (AUID), Department of
Architecture and Urban Studies (DASU)
at the Politecnico di Milano

WHAT?

An inquiry into ongoing research in Europe investigating the relationship between architecture and ecological transition. A glance at the contemporary scientific debate, to discuss its impact and the challenges for spatial design.

WHY?

To establish a European debate and a network of young researchers who are studying these topics.

HOW?

Call + roundtable discussions + book of proceedings + lectures + networking events. Participants will be split into thematic sessions, moderated by researchers from PoliMi.

WHO?

PhD candidates enrolled in a European University + researchers and practitioners who have defended their PhD dissertation within the last 5 years.

WHEN and WHERE?

24, 25 and 26 January 2024

at the Politecnico di Milano, Milan, Italy

THE EVENT

In person activities in Milan. Roundtable discussions, presentations, lectures by international keynote speakers and networking events.

OUTPUT

Online Abstract repository + Book of proceedings with ISBN

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

[To be confirmed]

Jeremy Till / Professor of Architecture,
Central Saint Martins UAL
Tobias Theil Konishi / Project Director
at SLA architecture
Catherine Mosbach / Mosbach
Paysagistes

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

The scientific committee is composed of:
Sara Marini – IUAV
Annalisa Metta – Roma Tre
Sara Protasoni – Politecnico di Milano,
Master track Coordinator
Alessandro Rocca – Politecnico di
Milano, Head of AUID Ph.D. Program
Ilaria Valente – Politecnico di Milano,
Vice Rector for International Affairs,
Vice President of EAAE
Tadeja Zupančič – University
of Ljubljana, Vice-Dean for Research