

# PhD in ARCHITECTURE. HISTORY AND DESIGN

## Research Title: THE SHAPERS OF URBAN FORM. Explorations on urban coding as urban form agency

<b>Funded by</b>	DAD/Centro Interdipartimentale FULL/Ateneo fondi CRT
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<b>Context of the research activity</b>	<p>The PhD research proposal is part of a network between FULL, DASP PhD Program, “Transitional Morphologies” Joint Research Unit and ISUF.</p> <p>The PhD Program “Architecture. History and Project” (DASP) at Politecnico di Torino has been recognized by the Italian national evaluation council ANVUR, for the 37th cycle (2021-2024), as INNOVATIVE in its international, interdisciplinary and (for the first time) inter-collaborative approaches.</p> <p>The new recognition for inter-collaborative approach is due to the link with some development enterprises and research centers. Among them, FULL (the Future Urban Legacy Lab), hosts and tutors some DASP PhD Candidates each year since 2018.</p> <p>To the “Transitional Morphology” Joint Research Unit, established in 2018 between Politecnico di Torino and Southeast University Nanjing, are connected around 10 DASP PhD dissertation (some already discussed, some others on going). TransMo JRU is operative in the framework of ISUF (the International Seminar on Urban Forum), taking part in national (Italy and China) congresses and in international Conferences (the last one, online held at University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, from June 29th to July 2nd 2021 was devoted to “Urban Form and the Sustainable Prosperous City”).</p>
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The contents and the aims of the proposal arises (in the framework of DASP missions in researchers' education) from the comparison between the most updated discussion topics within urban morphologies' studies and the goals and expectations of FULL and TransMo JRU.

**Objectives**

The aim of the research proposal is verifying the theories of "urban morphology agency" through two actions: testing the effective role of urban codes in shaping urban forms, exploring the public/private nature of urban codes. These two actions are the preliminary step to figure out innovative practices of urban morphology agency.

In approaching nowadays urban transformations (their natures, their mechanisms, their "laws", their tangible and intangible outcomes), the study of the "agents" involved in transformations and the control of the "processes" outlining transformations are the core of the so called "urban morphology agency". The shapers of urban form (or the "agents of change" of urban form) are no more only developers, architects, builders, local authority planning officers, local politicians by themselves, but a multilayer network of them along with an increasing role of the community itself and of the market, too. At the same time the planning action (above all in the phases of plan implementation and plan development control) nowadays still seems the main tool capable to shape urban forms.

In that scenario, the role of urban coding in describing potentialities of transformation of areas, plots, built artifacts (also through the morphological categories of urban fabric, urban pattern, building type) can be more and more enhanced, even overpassing the urban planning activity in itself and even finding a new order in public-private partnerships.

The main challenge of the research stays in establishing an ordered classification of sets of rules, capable nowadays to shape urban forms, and in observing them as devices, to check each phase of their functioning and to evaluate their effectiveness.

After an analysis of the state of the art, even in a historical perspective (in order to understand the technical, strategic and "decision making" foundations of urban codes), a second part of the research activity will be focused in observing sets of rules, used in some specific settlements and different cultures to develop and transform urban morphologies. The question of parameterization tools for measuring their effectiveness will be the last stage of the research.

	<p>The research will be discussed together with Luigi Buzzacchi (Full Professor Management Engineer at Politecnico di Torino, expert of Urban economics) and with Camillo Boano (Full Professor of Architectural and Urban Design at Politecnico di Torino and Professor of Urban Design and Critical Theory at The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, UCL), both of which at the Department of Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning (DIST).</p> <p>Provisional reviews will be organized with Nicola Marzot (Professor of Urban Design at TU Delft and Università di Ferrara) in the framework of an agreement with ISUF Italy (International Seminar on Urban Form).</p>
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<b>Skills and competencies for the development of the activity</b>	<p>Deep knowledge of the three references:</p> <p>Peter J. Larkham, Michael P. Conzen (eds.), <i>Shapers of Urban Form. Explorations in Morphological Agency</i>, Routledge, London, 2014</p> <p>Stephen Marshall (ed), <i>Urban Coding and Planning</i>, Routledge, London 2011</p> <p>Eran Ben-Joseph, <i>The Code of the City: Standards and the Hidden Language of Place Making</i>, MIT Press, Boston 2005</p>
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