



Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst  
German Academic Exchange Service



Higher Education Dialogue  
with the Muslim World

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS:

# DISCOVERING FUTURE CITIES

Urban life has become the main feature of architecture, planning, society and politics in the Middle East and Europe. In many ways, it has become a contesting and challenging experience to live in cities already and it will be even more in the future. The loss of heritage and identity, overcrowding and density, climate change and environmental problems, social inequalities and poverty, lacking non-motorized mobility, civic inclusion and missing public spheres are the key issues for any debate for the future of cities in both regions.

With this call, we want to invite post-graduate students from all relevant disciplines including architecture, urban and regional planning, social and political studies to participate in the conference "Discovering future cities" at Cairo University from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 2020. The conference is especially directed to young academics who have just finished their master thesis or started their PhD project.

The conference calls for scientific contributions especially on the following six fields of study:

**1. Heritage:** In many cities, historical districts are under pressure by either a lack of resources or lack of proper interventions in fields of architectural and urban conservation, rehabilitation or revitalisation. Challenges facing historic districts are often linked to a broader tangible and intangible transformation of the affected neighbourhood leading to problems related to change of uses, social and built deprivation, different forms of infill-design and gentrification, among other problems. Proposals should address these processes and offer insights into the ongoing processes in heritage districts.

**2. Mobility:** Cities are still attracting people from everywhere. In some cities, this is more related to internal mobility from the rural areas, in others international migration has an important impact on the urban development. Urban mobility tackles other challenges including social justice, social mobility, accessibility, traffic and demand management, transport for people with reduced mobility, transit oriented development (TOD), shared mobility, multi-modal seamless solutions and green approaches to urban mobility focussing on cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable urban transport. Proposals should address one of these aspects of mobility.

**3. Housing:** In most of the countries addressed in this conference, the question of housing is a severe architectural, planning, economic and social issue. It is observable that major changes have taken place in the planning policies for housing. Nevertheless, an analytical and empirically grounded evaluation of successful and failed experiences with different housing policies is lacking. This is especially true for policies regarding social housing and housing in informal settlements. Proposals should contribute to a deeper understanding on housing policies or address new developments like the emergence of gated communities and real estate developments.

**4. Civic engagement:** Many citizens are motivated to increase the quality of urban life, especially in their neighbourhood. In many cities, different forms of participation are established and broad urban movements are active. Proposals are welcome which are giving more insights into the inclusion of citizens in urban planning, experiences with participation and the concerns of civil society.

**5. Public spaces:** While classically public spaces have been functioning as meeting points in cities for a long time, today these places are undergoing substantial transformation. Urban design and planning have been contributing to the physical and social improvement in many cases. Nevertheless, questions about its public character have become more important, as the privatization of space threatens the accessibility of many of them. Also, the impact of social media on public spaces has become important. Questions today include how the diversity of life styles in a city can be enabled by its public spaces. Issues of safety and security and gender democracy are at stake, as well. Proposals are asked for which tackle one of the aspects in a case study of a city in the Middle East or Germany.

**6. Migration and ethnic diversity:** With the influx of migrants from other parts of the country like in Cairo from the South of Egypt or from foreign countries like in Germany, many issues about the housing and social integration need to be addressed. Concerns are that a missing planning strategy for integration will lead to ghettos and increasing spatial and social segregation. This call is looking for proposals to learn more about existing local integrative policies giving space for ethnic diversity and the integration of refugees and migrants.

## How to apply:

The conference is a joined project of the German-Jordanian University in Amman, the Notre Dame University-Louaize in Beirut, the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar/Germany and the Cairo University. It is intending to foster an intellectual dialogue between students and scholars from all Middle East countries\* and Germany. The conference will be part of the exchange programme "Discovering cities" supported by the German Academic Exchange Association (DAAD). All accepted participants will be financially supported for their travel and accommodation.

The submitted papers will be reviewed by the academic partners of the four universities and published after the conference.

**We invite students to send their abstract until 15th of October 2019 to**

[Frank.Eckardt@uni-weimar.de](mailto:Frank.Eckardt@uni-weimar.de)

The conference is especially directed to young academics who have just finished their master thesis or started their PhD project.

The abstract should not be longer than 350 words. It should inform about the subject, the main points of argument and findings. It should further indicate to which of the above six fields of study it would like to contribute. The abstract should also be accompanied by a letter of motivation informing about the academic career so far. Applicants shall submit a scan of a valid passport

Time schedule:

15th of October 2019	Dead line for abstract submission (including passport scans)
15th of November 2019	Selection of accepted participants
1st of February 2020	Submission of a first draft of the paper Invitation letter for Visa application (if needed)
01st of June 2020	Review of the paper
1st of October 2020	Conference at the Cairo University

---

\* Actually it goes beyond the Middle East Countries: Researchers from all countries that are members in the *Organisation of Islamic Cooperation* (<https://www.oic-oci.org/states/?lan=en>) are invited to apply.