

ALUMNI-MEETING 01

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Institute for European Urbanism, BUW

Nathalie Jean-Baptiste graduated in the year 2012 with the topic: *People centered approach towards food waste management in the urban environment of Mexico.*

PhD

- There will be no more such peaceful research time in your work as a researcher, as the one you experience during your PhD.
- During your work pursue all the questions that nurture you and that are important for your individual interest. The correct matching of your investigations with your character may pay off while planning your career.
- Developing the PhD on the same topic as your master thesis is an efficient strategy.
- You can pursue your questions in any place of the world. In the case of Nathalie it was possible to apply her methods of investigating Mexican waste management systems during her explorations in Sydney.

Career-work balance

- Start applying as soon as you approximate your PhD deadline. But don't exaggerate it! Otherwise you might end up working full time and not having enough time to complete your PhD.
- Your social network is crucial for finding a job that suits you best. Be it friends or Professors' contacts, personal recommendation works best and it is the case worldwide. People making the choices are psychologically inclined to accept people they have been affiliated with. Work with your networks!
- There are three most common career options for the PhD depending on the specific field: go to private sector (mostly promoted engineers); go to large research institutions such as Nathalie's UFZ-Leipzig; or remain in the academia, at the university.
- It is good to keep on applying to diverse potential employees also "for sport", to check your market value, to train the negotiation skills needed to convince people to your personality.

Work-life balance

- Sharing priorities with your second half is basic for optimizing your goals. Once you have the right to choose the best place to work for you, another time period is her/his.
- For the first 3 to 9 years after the PhD you have to be ready to work on short term contracts up to 3 years. Only exceptionally you will get an extension, and even more rarely an unlimited contract – in the research industry.