



## **Urban histories, theories and practices**

Doctoral course offered in spring 2026 at the School of Architecture, KTH  
FAD3117. 7,5 ECTS

This course provides participants with a broad, yet in-depth understanding of critical urban matters that inform research on planning and design, based on both well-established and emerging perspectives in architecture, critical urban theory and urban studies. Including historical backdrops on city formations, planning regimes and urban development – with an emphasis on the modern period – the course will familiarise students with urgent issues pertaining to the contemporary “urban age” in order to broaden the perspective on more local urban conditions and our means for shaping the built environment. The course adopts a critical, relational, and forward-looking approach to discuss the conditions, opportunities, and limitations of city-making processes through urban planning and design. Drawing on a wide array of multidisciplinary theories and readings, the course will maintain a close focus on the physical fabric of the built environment in order to address the intersection between the discipline of architecture and the expanded field, tantamount to “the city.” Students are encouraged to employ different sources and means of representation, such as fiction, maps, film, art, architecture etc., as part of their investigations into different aspects of urban development. Upon completion of the course, participants are expected to be able to discuss and problematise the ethical, democratic and environmental dimensions of urban theory and design, and relate these to their own research project.

## Course set-up

The course is divided into four modules, composed of lectures / presentations, workshops and seminars. Students are required to work independently in-between modules, and to develop a paper that is to be presented and discussed at the final module which will be held on zoom. All other modules require in person attendance at KTH.

Modul 1: *Urban imaginaries*. 4-6 March  
Wednesday 4/3 at 13:00 – Friday 6/3 at 12:00

Modul 2: *Urban challenges*. 22–24 April  
Wednesday 22/4 at 13:00 – Friday 24/4 at 12:00

Modul 3: *Urban practices*. 20-22 May  
Wednesday 20/5 at 13:00 – Friday 22/5 at 12:00

Modul 4: *Final presentations*. 16–17 June (TBC)  
Tuesday 16/6 at 09:00 – Wednesday at 17:00

## Learning outcomes

On completion of the course, the student will be...

- familiar with the main features of the historical development of cities, with an emphasis on the modern era, and be able to apply this knowledge in critical analyses of local environments.
- able to describe current trends, opportunities and problems related to contemporary urbanisation processes with reference to the main trends in urban research.
- familiar with the fundamentals and practices of contemporary urban development paradigms and be able to discuss applications in different contexts.
- able to conduct a critical and theoretically grounded discussion on various aspects of urban development from a long-term sustainability perspective.
- able to reflect on the contribution of their own research to the subject and in relation to sustainable urban development.

## Prerequisites

The course caters to PhD students with an educational background in architecture, urban design/studies or planning but welcomes students broadly situated within the arts, humanities and social sciences. Participants must be enrolled in doctoral studies at a university or research institute in Sweden, Scandinavia or within the EU. The course is a mandatory, strand-specific course in *stadsbyggnad* for doctoral students at A-KTH. The course will be held for 5-20 participants.

## Examination

The course is graded P/F and based on three parts: attendance, individual assignments and final assignment. To pass the course, students must have 80% attendance to scheduled sessions and have completed the assignments at an accepted standard.

## Course responsible

Adrià Carbonell, Ph.D and lecturer, [adriacr@kth.se](mailto:adriacr@kth.se)

Daniel Koch, associate professor in urban theory and design, [daniel.koch@arch.kth.se](mailto:daniel.koch@arch.kth.se)

Catharina Gabrielsson (course examiner), professor in urban theory and design, [cga@kth.se](mailto:cga@kth.se)

## Applications – short deadline!

We ask for a short motivation (250 words), the title and a brief description of your research project (250 words) and documentation of your registration as a doctoral student. The application must be composed into one pdf and send by e-mail to Adrià ([adriacr@kth.se](mailto:adriacr@kth.se)) *no later than Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February*. Notifications and/or confirmations of acceptance will be sent out by Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February along with a detailed schedule of module 1. We reserve the right to make a selection of applicants based on their interests and profiles.