

** PhD position in the Marie Skłodowska-Curie ITN: DCOMM: ESR13: Deictic communication in architectural and urban design **

<https://apply.refline.ch/845721/4463/pub/1/index.html>

The Chair for Cognitive Science at ETH Zürich (<http://www.cog.ethz.ch>) invites applications for one (1) three-year scholarship for a PhD student working in Cognitive Science, Cognitive Psychology, Design Studies or Design Cognition, starting as early as September 2016. The grant is funded by Marie Curie ITN Early Stage Researcher project to Prof. Christoph Hölscher and is intended to support a PhD student in successfully developing an innovative and interdisciplinary research project in “Cognitive Factors of Architectural and Urban Design”. Particular emphasis is put on how designers use gestures and other communicative references, in turn, revealing thought and communication practices. The project is intended for advanced undergraduate students or masters students who will directly enrol in a PhD program (three-year fellowship).

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The scholarship holder is expected to develop an innovative and interdisciplinary research project within the DCOMM Research Consortium “Project 13: Deictic communication in architectural and urban design”.

About the project: The spatial arrangements in architectural design tasks are too detailed and nuanced to be reliably communicated by verbal descriptions alone. Thus, the dialogue among designers as well as in exchange with their clients is based on deictic gestures and verbal references to objects such as plans, 3D models and ad-hoc sketches. This project will characterize and classify the deictic references occurring in different stages of the design process. It will also distinguish between novice and senior designers with respect to their deictic reference strategies and their ability to adjust such behaviours to different communication partners. The project will include a research placement (3-6 months) at KCAP (Kees Christiaanse Architecture Partners) in Rotterdam and Zurich, as well as an additional secondment to another partner university. The empirical foundation of the research project will build upon observations and experiments with architects and urban planners of various degrees of expertise. Methodology will include interviews, verbal protocols, video analysis and eye-tracking. A further objective address the impact of new technologies in architectural design, such as using Virtual Reality tools for testing and communicating design options. In general, the Chair for Cognitive Science, with a network of connections to architectural and design practices, focuses on the testing of real user behaviour in large-scale environments and the communication between designers about those environments. Projects have included working with Frankfurt Airport in usability studies, and convening the first international prize for architectural design informed by usability criteria. All applications will be reviewed by a selection committee from Linguistics, Psycholinguistics and Cognitive Science. Selection criteria include the candidate’s academic preparation and accomplishments to date, academic promise and originality of the project, as well as its fit within the research project focus. Shortlisted applicants may be invited for an interview via Skype. If accepted, the scholarship holder is expected to take up residence in Zurich and enrol in the PhD program of the Department of Department of Humanities, Social and Political Sciences, or in another relevant department, such as architecture. The scholarship holder will participate in the training activities of the Innovative Training Network, including academic courses on specialized topics in linguistics, psycholinguistics, cognitive science and related disciplines. The Consortium also hosts research visits of internationally known researchers from various fields and

regular ESR meetings. The scholarship holder will further benefit from other course offerings at ETH Zurich as part of the training, and interdisciplinary inputs from cognitive science, psychology and architecture. In addition, the Research Consortium also supports participation in summer schools, conferences and secondment visits to international partner institutions. For a total of up to 36 months, the scholarship holder will receive a grant, plus a supplementary family allowance, if applicable, and may apply on an occasional basis for travel costs and participation at international conferences.

The successful candidate is expected to hold a good Master's level degree (or equivalent) in Cognitive Science, Psychology, Anthropology or other relevant behavioural science, or to have Master's level training in Architecture, Urban Planning or related design disciplines. The candidate must have some experience with collecting data about human cognitive processes. Candidates from a design background must have strong exposure to scientific thinking and/or empirical methodology as well as some research experience in the area of Design Studies or Design Cognition, or some other cognitively or human-centered research work. Excellent spoken and written English language skills are essential. Desirable: The successful candidate ideally needs to have documented research activities, such as presentations/publications and experience of advanced statistical analyses. Experience with design experiments, design interviews, observation studies and protocol analysis, video analysis or eye-tracking is also desirable. The ideal candidate will have a passion for linking cognitive science with understanding architectural design.

Interested candidates should send their applications electronically, including: (a) their BA's degree or equivalent (scan), (b) their Master's degree or equivalent (scan), (c) a curriculum vitae (CV), including the names and email addresses of at least two senior scholars who are willing to provide letters of reference, (d) a brief sketch of how the candidate's research interests match with the project, ideally providing a sketch for a potential dissertation project (no more than 1 page), (e) optional: a detailed prospectus for their dissertation project (no more than 5 pages) is also welcome and (f) an accompanying letter outlining their motivation for applying for the Research Consortium. Make sure that you include the keywords "DCOMM – project 13" in your email subject header. Application deadline is March 21st, 2016. Informal enquiries may be addressed to: Prof. Christoph Hölscher christoph.hoelscher@gess.ethz.ch
Please submit your application online (<https://apply.refline.ch/845721/4463/pub/1/index.html>) and then go to the "apply now" button) with Attention to: ETH Zurich, Mr. Olivier Meyrat, Human Resources, CH-8092 Zürich.

Please note, that Marie Skłodowska-Curie ITNs come with a "mobility rule" requirement: The researcher must not have resided or carried out his/her main activity (work, studies, etc) in the country of his/her host organisation for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior to his/her recruitment. Shorter stays, such as holidays, are not taken into account.