



**POLITECNICO**  
MILANO 1863

## Supervisor Expression of Interest MSCA-IF Marie Sklodowska Curie Action-Individual Fellowship

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Department Name: Research topic: ( <a href="https://www.polimi.it/en/scientific-research/research-structures/departments/">https://www.polimi.it/en/scientific-research/research-structures/departments/</a> )	Department of Design Polimi DESIS Lab Design for social innovation
MSCA-IF Research Area Panels	CHE_Chemistry ECO_Economic Sciences ENG_Information Science and Engineering ENV_Environmental and Geosciences LIF_Life Sciences MAT_Mathematics PHY_Physics X SOC_Social Sciences and Humanities
Politecnico di Milano Areas:	Cultural Heritage Smart Cities X Territorial Fragilities Health Industry 4.0
Brief description of the Department and Research Group (including URL if applicable):	<a href="http://www.dipartimentodesign.polimi.it/">http://www.dipartimentodesign.polimi.it/</a> <b>Department of Design</b> The department conducts research and provides training and consulting services in fields ranging from intangible design to the concrete artefacts that populate our world. What sets the department apart is a combination of the following elements: the significance of design and its practices, the sharing of methods and tools, the capacity to act within the various processes of production of tangible and intangible goods, history and culture, as founding elements of design, a polytechnical approach.  <a href="http://www.desis.polimi.it">http://www.desis.polimi.it</a> <b>Polimi DESIS Lab</b> is composed of a group of researchers adopting a strategic and systemic approach to design, with a specific focus on design for services and design activism. It has a background in service and product-service-system design for sustainability and investigates the way design can support and trigger social innovation, combining creativity and visioning with the capability of engaging in co-design processes.



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	<p>The Lab operates in multicultural and multidisciplinary contexts, integrating various competences in systemic projects, which require contributions from service design, strategic design, user centered design, interaction design, product design, interior/spatial design, design for territory and local development, communication, economics, architecture, planning and sociology.</p>
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<p><b>Brief project description:</b> <b>(max 1 page)</b></p>	<p>In a changing society, confronted by new challenges and new opportunities, the increasing complexity of territorial fragilities - given in different contexts by a plethora of different reasons often intertwined together, that span for instance from socio- economical, geographical, political, cultural ones - ask for innovative experimental approaches that might allow for a deeper comprehension of the potentialities (for instance in terms of socio, economical, symbolical and cultural resources) offered by different contexts. Design research can help to gain more insight into these potentialities, first of all identifying them - for instance through qualitative methods, e.g. design ethnography - and subsequently making them visible and tangible, to envision what it could mean if these potentialities were fully developed. Particularly, design can catalyse grassroots social innovation, social inclusion and active citizenship. It can help citizens to envision new possibilities for their own contexts in a collaborative fashion, tackling issues connected to their own territorial fragilities (these can range from geo-political, to social, environmental and economic ones), and co-design and co-produce new solutions, that might aid in developing the potentialities present (and often still unseen or under-seen) of their own context. This idea of design research potentially leading to insights and solutions for supporting local communities to identify and design for the issues connected to their territorial fragilities (often together with other local stakeholders such as civil servants, local associations and policy makers is often referred to as Design for Social Innovation. These kinds of experimentations in local contexts are already happening, for instance in the Universities belonging to the DESIS Network (<a href="http://www.desisnetwork.org">www.desisnetwork.org</a>), and also in Politecnico di Milano, in the POLIMI DESIS Lab (<a href="http://www.desis.polimi.it">http://www.desis.polimi.it</a>). Yet, more experimentation is needed, for instance, by utilising insights from other disciplines - e.g. from the humanities - traditionally dealing with society at large, and translate this knowledge into new approaches and experimentations. More specifically, valuable discourses in contemporary philosophy dealing with issues connected to society, could concretely contribute to this discussion. The German philosopher Hannah Arendt has discussed amply the idea of citizen participation, democracy, human rights, collaboration, city-making, common issues and activism, all topics which recent experiments and scholarly activity . How can we translate these philosophical insights into operational, actionable concepts meaningful for design practices of SI dealing with territorial fragilities, and the resources already present 'potentially' in the territory to be fully exploited and create added value for society at large? How can for instance Arendt's idea of active citizenship concretely help design for SI to empower new forms of participation in cities, where all the stakeholders (citizens but also the civil society) can together contribute to strengthen the socio-economical tissue and support new forms of collaborative city making, in which citizens and other stakeholders can imagine and construct new configurations to strengthen the social tissue and generate new resilient socio-economical ecosystems? How can Arendt's philosophy support self-reflection in these design practices experimenting with new ways to deal with territorial fragilities? How can Arendt's philosophy help design for SI to more critically consider the way in which it is currently dealing with participation in the co-creation and co-production of new solutions for territorial fragilities, and in exploring new ways to more effectively do it. Politecnico di Milano wishes to guest international researchers that can enrich the POLIMI DESIS lab (<a href="http://www.desis.polimi.it">http://www.desis.polimi.it</a>) with this transdisciplinary perspective that cross fertilise knowledge coming from humanities and design studies for better dealing in a participatory way with issues dealing with territorial fragilities and open new paths for academic research in design for SI.</p>
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