





This document collects all the fundamental information to get an overall view of the PhD path.

It is based on:

- the Italian Laws on PhD programmes
- the University Regulations for PhD programmes
- the information provided by the PhD School website.

National and University regulations are available here: http://www.dottorato.polimi.it/en/during-your-phd/regulations/

welcome kit

PhD programme in Design XXXIII cycle





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The Politecnico di Milano was among the first universities in Italy to start a PhD programme in the field of design in 1990. Based on this tradition, the PhD programme in Design was established in 2008, as the result of a process of substantial re-thinking of the way design was taught at PhD level.

In its current configuration, the PhD programme in Design aims to develop professional skills to carry out high quality research in terms of design as a complete scientific field. In this respect, its main topics are: to reflect on the nature of design, with its aesthetic, formal, performance and meaning values, as well as its capability of being an agent of social change towards more sustainable systems; to strengthen the disciplinary core of design; to develop and share a common body of knowledge and methodologies, as well as a complete set of tools able to distinguish the designer from other researcher/professional figures involved in design activity.

The PhD programme in Design is structured into various **research fields**, which correspond to specific research teams within the Department of Design. In order to coordinate research activity over a wide range of topics, teams cluster around three Sections, which are:

- ★ Design and Cultures
- ★ Products, Strategies and Services
- ★ Design for Environments, Landscape and Mobility

The PhD programme in Design carries out research on specific topics emerging from the research initiatives of the research labs of the department.

introduction

_ _ programme

The programme aims at educating researcher-designers who will contribute original knowledge to the field of design by tackling the problems and identifying the potential of contemporary society.

Their contribution may be brought to bear in:

- * creating designs, visions, and proposals (research through design)
- ★ developing tools and methods for putting these into practice (research for design)
- ★ developing critical analysis of design and its application domain (research on design)

The Programme develops project and analytical abilities, proposes different methodologies of research, promotes the attitude to collaborate, and offers professional opportunities in universities and research centres, design enterprises and public corporate bodies.

_ _ mission and goals

The courses offered aim at training the candidates for the skills needed to carry out high quality research for companies, universities, research centres and other institutions.

The scientific field is Design. Other fields partially covered are Science and Philosophy, Language Theory, Sociology of Cultural Processes and Communication, History of Art, Science and Technology of Materials, Industrial Engineering, Operations Research, Computer Science.

The programme offers doctoral candidates the following **opportunities**:

- * to develop an original theme of research, becoming an effective member of a research team
- ★ to attend courses and seminars on design, on design research and on research in general, developing skills concerning the discipline of the design, and the profession of the researcher

- * to attend courses and seminars referred to a specific field of research, developing high-level specialist skills and acquiring knowledge and tools for the development of their own research theme
- * to be an active part of a teaching programme and, in this way, to understand the relationship between research and teaching, and to develop the ability to clearly and effectively present the contents of their own work
- * to develop expertise in an international research centre to verify the hypotheses, the methodologies and the results of their own work and to consolidate the network of international relationships within which it is situated

_ _ objectives

The achievement of the PhD qualification in Design requires a study and research activity equivalent to at least three years of full time study, research and development of PhD thesis. During this period, both educational and research activities are provided.

The programme develops design skills and analytical abilities, proposes various research methodologies and promotes a collaborative disposition.

At the beginning of the programme, candidates become effective members of a **research team**, within which they develop an original research topic (PhD thesis); this activity is the fundamental core of the learning process.

Parallel to this main activity, candidates are involved in several other educational processes, divided into training and specialist activities.

Training activities are those, such as courses and seminars, related to the discipline of design and research methodologies and practices, viewed in their entirety. Specifically: common activities are proposed to consolidate the cultural and operational background, which is common to all areas of design research.

Specialist activities are those educational activities specifically regarding the areas of research in which the PhD programme as well as the Departments are articulated.

Moreover, the activities of the PhD in Design include participation in projects taking place within the research team; participation in conferences (as listeners or speakers); writing of scientific papers; participation - as tutors - in teaching activities, from the viewpoint of an on-going synergy between teaching and research activities.

the school system

_ _ the Polimi PhD School

The Politecnico di Milano was one of the first universities in Italy to establish a School of Doctoral Programmes in 2001 with a view to coordinating, assessing and monitoring the single doctorate programmes. The School offers courses to develop complementary abilities, such as seminars of epistemology, research policy and management, elements of scientific communication, and so on, whereas the single doctorate provides subjects and infrastructures for research, specific education and tutoring.

The PhD degree is the highest level of university education, aimed at developing abilities of PhD candidates through training and research, as well as promoting new entrepreneurial skills. This results in a research thesis with original contributions, enabling them to take up research activities in industrial settings, in the public and private sectors, in public administration, in research centres and universities. Politecnico di Milano offers Doctoral Programmes in all fields of Architecture, Engineering and Design.

The Polimi PhD School organizational chart

Board of directors It consists of 5 directors of the PhD programmes and the Head of the PhD School staff Council It consists of all the directors of the PhD programmes and the Head of the PhD School staff PhD School staff PhD candidates of the PhD programmes and four representatives of the doctoral candidates PhD candidates' representatives within the School

_ _ the Polimi Design System

The Design Department forms part of the Politecnico di Milano Design System, together with the School of Design, the PhD programme in Design, the Laboratories and the POLI.design Consortium.

Together, they represent one of the most important university bodies in the field of design in existence today at international level. The Department fosters the process that has established design in an academic context by constantly developing relations and collaborations with other players operating within the Design System, in Milan and Lombardy as well as at national and international level.

Polimi Design System

School of Design | www.design.polimi.it BSc and MSc levels

Design Department | www.dipartimentodesign.polimi.it sections, research labs, interdepartmental labs, labs for teaching and services and the PhD programme in Design (phd.design.polimi.it)

POLI.design Consortium | www.polidesign.net higher education courses, training for companies

The PhD programme in Design organizational chart

Director

prof. Paola Bertola

Deputy director

prof. Paolo Volonté

Steering committee

It consists of the director, the deputy director and 5 professors

Board of professors

Design PhD candidates' representative within the Design Department

Annalinda De Rosa

PhD Secretary Office

Simona Murina

Paola Bertola (director)
Paolo Volontè (deputy director)
Alessandro Biamonti (steering committee)
Lucia Rosa Elena Rampino (steering committee)
Raffaella Trocchianesi (steering committee)

Giovanni Baule Paola Bertola

Monica Bordegoni Giampiero Bosoni

Valeria Luisa Bucchetti

Alba Cappellieri

Paolo Ciuccarelli

Luisa Maria Virginia Collina Barbara Del Curto

Maria Luisa Galbiati

Luca Guerrini

Fulvio Irace

Pietro Marani Anna Meroni

Silvia Elvira Maria Piardi

Margherita Pillan

Silvia Luisa Pizzocaro

Maurizio Rossi

Michela Rossi Giuliano Simonelli

Carlo Arnaldo Vezzoli

Francesco Zurlo

research development & educational framework

The **main aim** of all Politecnico di Milano PhD programmes is the development in the candidates of a research-oriented mindset, with expertise and skills in a specific research topic. To this end, candidates develop a problem-solving ability in complex contexts, including the capacity of performing deep problem analysis, identifying original solutions, and evaluating their applicability in practical contexts. These skills provide the PhD candidates with major opportunities of development in their research both in the academic field and in public and private organisations.

PhD candidates are requested to develop an **original research contribution**.

The PhD thesis must thus contribute to increase the knowledge in the candidate's research field. Besides, it has to be coherent with the research topics developed in the Department where the PhD programme is carried out.

The original research results are collected in the PhD thesis, where the candidate's contribution is brought into correlation with the research state of the art in the specific research field.

The PhD programmes and the PhD School activate **teaching forms of different kind and credit value**, including courses, seminars, project workshops, and laboratories. Teaching activities both cover the basic research issues (problems, theories, methods), which represent the founding element of the PhD programme and clearly identify its cultural position, and in-depth treatment of some research issues connected with the problems developed in the theses.

Lessons are usually held in English, unless otherwise indicated.

Structured training activities grant the possibility of earning ECTS credits.

Other activities, typically specialised and for which it is difficult to evaluate the learning and its quantification, fall within the scientific activities which the Board of Professors takes into account in the overall evaluation, but they do not allow one to earn ECTS.

career

_ _ course plan

The Design PhD curriculum calls for candidates to accumulate a total of **70** academic credits.

→ For the admission to the final exam, acquisition of at least 70 credits is mandatory.

These 70 credits must be acquired via the **courses offered by the PhD in Design programme, the courses offered by the PhD School** and **the specialist activities** provided by the educational programme (see pp. 18-19).

For admission to the second and the third year, the acquisition of at least 20 credits (per year) is mandatory.

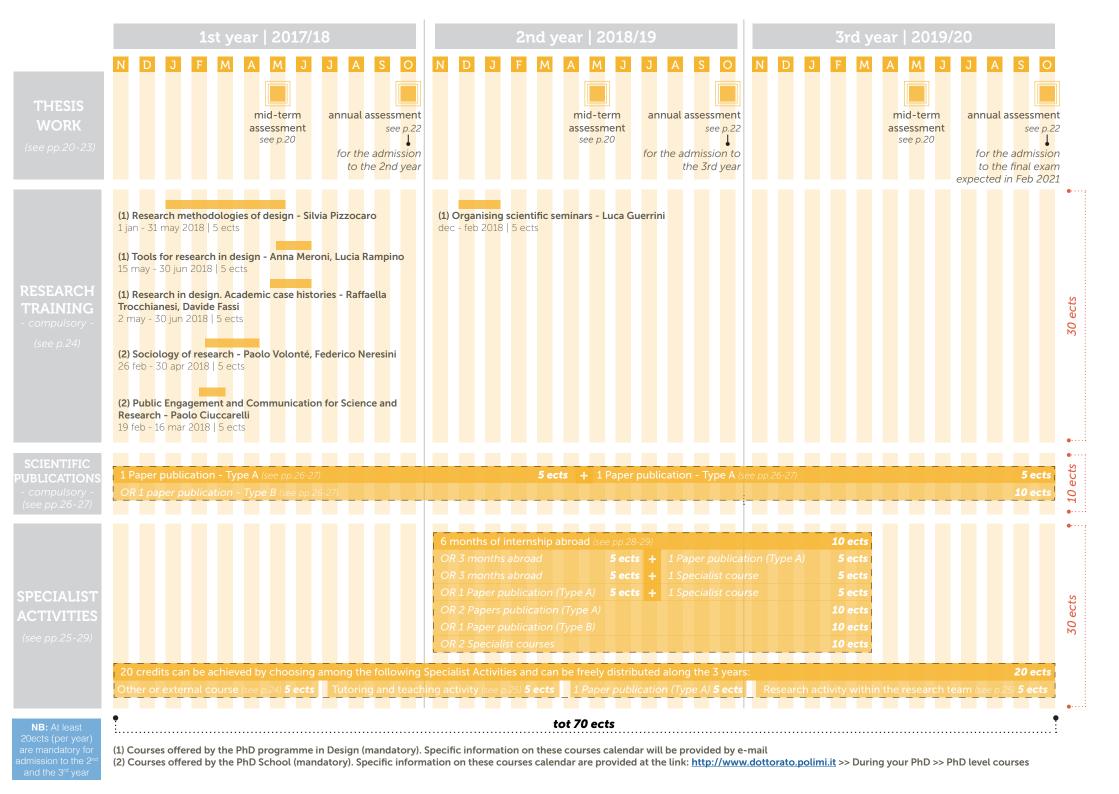
The third year should be entirely devoted to the development of the thesis.

The next page table illustrates the **curriculum** that each PhD candidate must fill out, for purposes of the attribution of academic credit. At the same time, the candidate will be required to carry out research under the guidance of his/her supervisor and the Design Board of professors.

Presentation of the study plan

During the first semester of enrolment, the candidate has to submit a study plan in order to adjust them to possible changes in the course list, or to needs motivated by the development of his/her PhD career.

This is to be done through the dedicated Politecnico di Milano online procedure (Online Services) at www.polimi.it/servizionline.



THESIS WORK

_ _ mid-term assessment (May)

Each year, at the end of the first semester, candidates submit their ongoing work on the PhD thesis to a commission consisting of Department members and Board representatives, in order to assess the progress of the thesis.

The PhD candidate is required to prepare

- ★ a presentation (following the format that will be provided 4-8 weeks prior to the submission deadline)
- ★ a provisional structure and sections of contents of the thesis (to be printed for the presentation day)

The assessment is structured as follows

- ★ the PhD candidate submits his/her work to the commission through a presentation (following the format that will be provided)
- ★ the presentation lasts 15 minutes for candidates of the 1st year and 20 minutes for candidates of the 2nd and 3rd year

Steps of the presentation (according to the own thesis development)

→ 1st year

- ★ theoretical requirements: critical and theoretical assumptions and scientific/ design context
- * research field, design setting and focus
- * general and specific objectives
- ★ methodology (phases, interpretative models adopted, ...)
- * future actions
- ★ bibliography
- ★ list of the candidate's activities and qualifications (participation in conferences, as both attendee and speaker, or research projects, seminars, workshops, etc.)
- * candidate scientific production (publications)

THESIS WORK

- ≥ 2nd year (highlight what has not been provided in the previous assessment)
 - ★ provisional index
 - * structure of the thesis and sections of contents
 - * theoretical requirements: critical and theoretical assumptions and scientific/ design context
 - ★ research field, design setting and focus
 - * general and specific objectives
 - * methodology (phases, interpretative models adopted, ...)
 - * focus of the project
 - * outcomes achieved
 - * future actions
 - * bibliography
 - ★ list of the candidate's activities and qualifications (participation in conferences, as both attendee and speaker, or research projects, seminars, workshops, etc.)
 - ★ candidate scientific production (publications)
- → 3rd year (highlight what has not been provided in the previous assessment)
 - * provisional index
 - * structure of the thesis and sections of contents
 - * theoretical requirements: critical and theoretical assumptions and scientific/ design context
 - * research field, design setting and focus
 - * general and specific objectives
 - ★ methodology (phases, interpretative models adopted, ...)
 - ★ focus of the project
 - * outcomes achieved
 - * factors of innovation and originality of the research
 - * future actions
 - * critical issues
 - * bibliography
 - ★ list of the candidate's activities and qualifications (participation in conferences, as both attendee and speaker, or research projects, seminars, workshops, etc.)
 - ★ candidate scientific production (publications)

THESIS WORK

_ _ annual assessment (October)

At the end of each year, candidates submit their research activity with their supervisor to a PhD board committee.

The PhD candidate is required to prepare a PhD Annual Review, which sets out to concisely illustrate the research progress and the activities done.

- ★ The format is available on the Online Services (PhD Student Career)
- ★ The document has to be approved by the supervisor and uploaded on the Online Services (PhD Student Career) by the end of the 1st and 2nd year
- ★ The submission deadline and the procedure details will be notified by e-mail about 4-8 weeks in advance

The dossier is structured as follows

- **a.** a short text summarising the research progress (status of research plan, etc.)
- **b.** list of the candidate's activities and qualifications (participation in conferences, as both attendee and speaker, or research projects, seminars, workshops, etc.)
- c. a list of the scientific production (publications)
- **d.** a copy of (or a selection of) the scientific publications listed has to be attached to the PhD Annual Review. On the day of the examination, each candidate is also required to bring a copy of his/her scientific publications.

The assessment is structured as follows

- ★ each PhD supervisor is asked to show up together with the candidate. The supervisor will briefly comment the research activity and the candidate's global effort within his/her research group
- the committee will evaluate the candidate's productivity on the basis of:

 - Scientific publications, participation in conferences and research projects
 - → The supervisor's evaluation of the candidate's global activity within the research team s/he belongs to
 - → The supervisor's evaluation on the progress in the candidate's PhD thesis.

Evaluation

As a result of each successful annual evaluation, the candidates receive an evaluation (A/B/C/D). Candidates who do not pass the exam will be qualified as "Repeating candidate" (Er) or "unable to carry on with the PhD" (Ei).

THESIS WORK

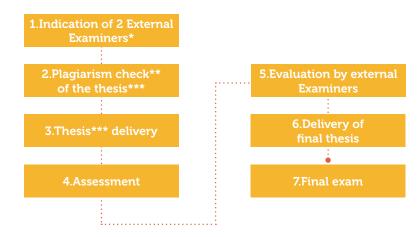
_ _ 3rd year: steps

The process will be illustrated more specifically at the beginning of the 3rd year. A specific kit will be available online (phd.design.polimi.it >> Download Area).

NB: European Doctorate

Candidates who would like to ask for a "European Doctorate" must read the "Regolamento del Dottorato di Ricerca del Politecnico di Milano" (art.11(10)) and inform the PhD Secretary Office prior to the 3rd year assessment.

The 3rd year steps are briefly illustrated hereunder:



^{*} Selected by the PhD candidate together with his/her supervisor

^{**} Through the Software provided by the PhD School

^{***} Version of the thesis as close as possible to the final one

RESEARCH TRAINING

_ _ the courses

The **PhD programme in Design** provides 20 out of 30 credits (see pp. 18-19). Candidates are required to take courses; assessment procedures and the course calendar will be provided by the professors in charge by e-mail.

The **PhD School** organises general and Interdoctoral courses every year. Two specific courses are mandatory (see pp. 18-19), while other courses can be freely selected (dottorato.polimi.it > "During your PhD" section > "PhD level courses" section).

Credits also can be obtained by choosing among courses provided by PhD programmes of **other universities** or by the attendance of **workshops, summer schools or seminars cycles**.

Prior approval by the supervisor and by the PhD Board is mandatory.

To secure approval, the candidate **must send a request to the PhD Secretary Office**, providing a description of the external activity selected; furthermore, it is fundamental that the external activity selected:

- ★ be addressed also to PhD candidates or researchers as well
- ★ be relevant to the candidate's research topic
- * last at least 25 hours

SPECIALIST ACTIVITIES

_ research activity within the research team

The PhD candidates could be required to participate in their research team activities, such as collaboration in research projects, organization of seminars, events and other educational/research activities, according to his/her supervisor's requests.

- ☑ The candidate's participation must then be validated by the supervisor.
- **Only one** research activity per year can be validated during the Annual Assessment.

_ _ tutoring or teaching activities in a course or a design studio

Participating in teaching activities as a teaching assistant or research fellow is part of the ongoing synergy between teaching and research.

Therefore, PhD candidates may participate in courses or design studios as tutors during the 3 years upon supervisor approval.

Fundamental information

- ★ to get the tutor's position within a course or design studio, it is necessary to reply to the official call for tutoring and teaching activity (www.polimi.it Home > Ateneo > Albo Ufficiale d'Ateneo)
- ★ PhD candidates can accomplish a maximum of 40 hours per year
- * the tutoring activity has to be validated by the supervisor.

SPECIALIST ACTIVITIES

_ _ paper publication

The production of scientific publications is an important opportunity to further the understanding of the research in progress and to be part of an international exchange of ideas.

The scientific university production is a fundamental element to spread the scientific knowledge and research topics developed in each department.

PhD candidates are required to obtain at least 10 credits within their Educational Framework (pp.18-19):

- * scientific publication must be in **English** (in an **international** context)
- * type A: a scientific publication within conferences and journals provides 5 credits
- ★ type B: a scientific publication in "WoS" and/or "SCOPUS"-indexed journals provides 10 credits (this information is provided by the websites of the specific journals)
- * the publication of scientific papers has to be validated by the supervisor during the annual assessment

The publication of 3 scientific papers is recommended over the three years to support and further the research in progress

The IRIS-Re.Public@Polimi online platform

Every year, the Polimi staff (professors, research assistants, PhD candidates, post-doc fellows, study grant fellows, technical & administrative staff) are asked to upload their publications on the IRIS online platform (Institutional Research Information System), which is linked to the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research (MIUR). Re.Public@Polimi is the institutional repository where research publications produced by scholars and researchers at the Politecnico di Milano are collected. >>>

THE UPLOAD ON THE IRIS-RE.PUBLIC PLATFORM IS MANDATORY

This report of the Polimi scientific production - sent to the "Ministry of Education, Universities, and Research" - contributes, in fact, to our University National and International Ranking and resultant National funding distribution.

SPECIALIST ACTIVITIES

Fundamentals for the upload on the IRIS-Re.Public platform

- ★ the **annual deadline** to upload the publications on the IRIS catalogue is communicated by the Department by e-mail (generally in April/June)
- ★ only products that show an explicit statement of the author's affiliation with

 "Politecnico di Milano Design Department" can be uploaded on the IRIS

 catalogue [NB: do not translate "Politecnico di Milano" in English!]
- ★ only products that have actually been **published** can be uploaded on the IRIS catalogue
- * conference papers have to consist of more than 6000 char. spaces included
- * complete information about the publication must be provided
- ★ the uploaded file (PDF, max 10Mb) must consist of cover + back cover + colophon + whole contribution + the scientific committee
- □ The complete guidelines on the evaluation procedure for scientific credentials are provided on the Polimi Intranet (www.polimi.it > intranet or www.intranet.polimi. it > Come fare per > Ricerca > Pubblicazioni > Catalogo prodotti della ricerca).
- The procedure to upload the publications on the IRIS online catalogue is accessible through the **Online Services** (www.polimi.it).

Contact office for the IRIS-Re.Public@Polimi online platform

Research Support Office produzionescientifica-design@polimi.it

SPECIALIST ACTIVITIES

_ _ internship abroad

The PhD programme favours the candidates' research interactions with other groups (universities, research centers, companies) in their research field to develop their research work and thesis.

- PhD candidates with scholarship granted by Politecnico di Milano: internship abroad is compulsory
- **PhD candidates without scholarship:** internship is recommended but not compulsory; it can be replaced by other activities (see Educational Framework, pp.18-19)
- **PhD candidates admitted through international agreement:** internship is not compulsory; if done, the internship can take place in the country of origin or within the Italian/Milanese context.

Fundamental information

- * complete period abroad: 6 months (10 ects)
- * minimum period abroad: 3 months (5 ects)
- ★ it is allowed to stay abroad more than 6 months (up to 18 months); the number of ects will not increase
- * to activate the exchange, there has to be a signed invitation letter from the university/research centre specifying the period dates and a short description of the activity that will be accomplished by the PhD candidate. An invitation letter is necessary for each period abroad
- * the internship can be done in more than 1 institution

NB: for PhD candidates with scholarship granted by the Politecnico di Milano For the periods spent abroad (lasting a minimum of ten days and a maximum of 6 months), the scholarship is increased by 50%.

To get the scholarship increase, candidates have to download the form from: www. dottorato.polimi.it > During your PhD > Periods abroad and stages > Periods abroad. The scholarship increases of 50% for a maximum of 6 months.

SPECIALIST ACTIVITIES

Whenever you take part in

conferences, stages or workshops <u>abroad</u>, you have to:

- 1. open a new "Mission Assignment Form" request on your personal Online Services before leaving, well in advance;
- 2. fill in the required information also in "Online Services > PhD Students Career > Requests for stays in foreign countries" (at least 15 days before leaving).

Whenever you take part in conferences, stages or workshops in Italy, you have to: open a new "Mission Assignment Form" request on your personal Online Services before leaving, well in advance.

Both requests must be agreed with your supervisor and get the authorization of the PhD Coordinator.

The PhD research is developed under the guidance of a supervisor, who supports the candidate in the set-up and in the everyday activities on developing the thesis. The supervisor supports the candidates throughout their training career.

The supervisor

- * assists candidates in the choice of courses to be included in a study plan, which must finally be approved by the Director of the PhD programme in Design
- ★ assists the candidate during the mid-term assessment (May)
- ★ is asked to show up together with the candidate during the annual assessment (October) and to briefly comment the research activity and the global effort of the candidate within his/her research group.
- * is asked to validate

 - ★ the research activity within the research team
 - ★ the publication of scientific papers
- ★ assists the plagiarism check of the final version of the thesis through an Internetbased plagiarism-prevention service provided by the School

For PhD candidates admitted with and without scholarship

(with the exception of the PhD candidates admitted through international agreement)

According to newly adopted regulations, from the 2nd year PhD candidates are allowed to access the endowment of € 2,740.00 at their disposal.

The endowment could be used to cover the following expenses:

- → consumables
- inventables (e.g., books), owned by the Design Department

A prior request to the Director of the PhD programme in Design should be put forward

The advance access during the first year is possible upon prior request to the Director of the PhD programme in Design.

The PhD administration will refund expenses related to activities that support the PhD research in Italy or abroad, to the extent of the aforementioned amount.

Contact offices:

- PhD Secretary Office
- for additional information on the expences that can be covered by the endowment
- Administration and Acconting Office acquisti.design@polimi.it
- for additional information on the related administrative procedures

contacts and and websites

PhD programme in Design

Design Department - Politecnico di Milano via Durando 38/a 20158 - Milano

Director of the PhD programme in Design

Paola Bertola paola.bertola@polimi.it

PhD Secretary Office

Department of Design Phone: +39.02.2399.7245 Fax: +39.02.2399.5968

segreteriadottorato.design@polimi.it

PhD candidates' representative within the Design Department

Annalinda De Rosa annalinda.derosa@polimi.it

Welcome kit by

Annalinda De Rosa, Raffaella Trocchianesi and Agnese Piselli with the support of the PhD Steering Committee and the PhD Secretary.

Politecnico di Milano | www.polimi.it Polimi PhD School | www.dottorato.polimi.it Department of Design | www.dipartimentodesign.polimi.it PhD programme in Design | phd.design.polimi.it Guarantee Commitee (CUG)* | www.cpo.polimi.it/comitato-unico-di-garanzia

* Unique Guarantee Commitee (CUG) is the sole commitee for the guarantee of equal opportunities, the valorisation of the wellbeing of workers and against discrimination (Italian Law n. 183/2010).

You can contact them for any issues connected to the well-being in the working environment to get any support needed. The privacy of the communicated issue is guaranteed.

Note: Supporting information not included in this document would be provided by e-mail.

