SENIOR RESEARCHER (POST-DOC OR EQUIVALENT) IN SUSTAINABLE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

(18 months contract - part time or full time possibility)

INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND LAND-USE PLANNING (IGEAT)

BUILDING, ARCHITECTURE & TOWN PLANNING (BATIR)

Job description

The research groups GESTe and CEDD of IGEAT (Institute of Environmental Management & Land-Use Planning, Faculty of Science - http://igeat.ulb.ac.be/en/) and SAUL of BATir (Building, Architecture & Town Planning, Faculty of Engineering - http://batir.ulb.ac.be/) are looking for a dynamic and motivated senior researcher (post-doc or equivalent by experience) to fill a research vacancy in the interdisciplinary domain of Circular Economy. This vacancy is part of an institutionally-financed joint research project, titled "**Sustainable Circular Economy – Which Circularity? Evaluation, Design and Governance**", which is lead by Prof(s) Wouter Achten (IGEAT-GESTe), Tom Bauler (IGEAT-CEDD) and prof. Ahmed Z. Khan (BATir-SAUL).

The candidate is expected to have developed expertise on <u>one</u> (or more) of the 3 following axes of the project, and is willing to expand his/her expertise on the other remaining axes in an interdisciplinary way:

- **Circularity Evaluation** - development of tools to evaluate circularity (e.g. LCA-based),
- **Sustainable Design** - conceptualisation of design strategies and models for sustainable built environment,
- **Governance** - analyses of innovative governance modes / arrangements

Project description

The joint research project on "Sustainable Circular Economy" is funded with intra-ULB seed-money for a duration of 2 years. The project was born out of the observation that circular economy is claimed to support evolution towards sustainable prosperity, hence becoming an integrative endeavor at the crossroads of economic, social and environmental dimensions. However, up to now there are only few concrete/empirical evaluation studies that are able to analytically support these in principia claims of sustainability. Moreover, the multitude of possible configurations of cycling concepts, sustainable design practices, alternative economic models, and governance arrangements poses the fundamental research questions underlying the project: **Which circularity for which context by what practice? And, how to assess this?**

The general objective of this project is to contribute to the understanding of such "sustainable circular economy" configurations and develop a scientifically sound analytical apparatus and implementation approaches. The project is in principle directed at the urban/metropolitan levels and takes Brussels as its main case study. The project aims to achieve this by considering 3 research axes - evaluation, governance, design - of which one (or more) should be further developed by the post-doctoral researcher following her/his research background and expertise.

Research description

The candidate will develop the main project idea further through an in-depth state-of-the-art in the three fields/axes in an interdisciplinary way. In collaboration with the project leaders, the candidate is expected to valorise these research activities in the form of joint scientific publications and in developing project proposals for several upcoming funding instruments at the local and European levels. Further, the post-doctoral researcher will contribute to the daily activities of the research groups. The furthering of interactions with other research groups across the ULB – as well as internationally with our networks - will be intensively supported by the 3 project leaders who intend to strategically insert their collaboration in the wider research field. All of these activities will build the basis for follow-up funding and a longer-term integration of the candidate. The project is assumed to develop over the 3 forthcoming years into a full-scale research group working collaboratively on cross-disciplinary circular economy issues; the candidate would be in the first line during the creation of the group.

Profile

The ideal candidate:

- Holds a PhD - or has an equivalent profile through research experience in past projects. Disciplinary background is of lesser importance, considering the strict interdisciplinary working environment provided, but relevant expertise could be located in environmental sciences and policies, engineering/architecture, urban design/planning, cross-dimensional evaluation
- Demonstrates research experience or interest in circular economy and sustainability, ideally at urban/metropolitan levels
- Has good publications track record
- Has interest/experience in writing (Regional / European) research project proposals
- Has excellent writing and presentation skills
- Is able to sustain a research network
- Is autonomous, dynamic, motivated
- Is fluent in English language (including written). French proficiency is an asset

Interested ?

For further information on the position or the research project you may contact prof. Wouter Achten (wouter.achten@ulb.ac.be; +32 2 650 43 22).

To apply, you should send (all documents in English):

- a detailed curriculum vitae, including your publication list ;
- a cover letter stating your motivation for this position (specifying on which project axis you would position) and relevant past experiences; and
- a digital copy of your best scientific output most relevant for this vacancy (e.g. PhD thesis, presentation, journal article / paper, book chapter)

to Wouter Achten (Wouter.achten@ulb.ac.be) **no later than June 25th, 2017**.

Job interviews will be planned during the week of the 10th of July 2017. The starting date could be September 2017 but is negotiable depending on the availability/preference of the selected candidate).

Work Environment:

Founded in 1834, **Université libre de Bruxelles** (http://www.ulb.ac.be) has a long tradition of excellence in Research with four scientific Nobel Prizes, one Fields Medal, three Wolf Prizes and two Marie Curie Excellence Awards. It is one of the largest and best Research Universities in Belgium, with a student population of 24,000 and with almost 1,600 PhD in progress, in partners with 20 Doctoral schools. ULB has considerable experience with European funding programmes and is involved in more than 160 projects financed by both the 7th European Framework Programme and Horizon 2020.

IGEAT

Founded in 1993 within ULB, the **Institute for environmental management and land-use planning** (IGEAT – http://igeat.ulb.ac.be) is an interdisciplinary education and applied research Institute. Scientific staff is about 40 interdisciplinary researchers.

- The group **Environmental, Societal and Land Management (GESTe)** is one of the research units of IGEAT. This multidisciplinary team specializes in environmental assessment in the broad sense. The group masters assessment techniques for products and services (e.g. LCA), projects (e.g. environmental impact assessment), as well as for plans (e.g. strategic environmental assessment) and programs and policies. Next to their evaluation function, these competences are also used to nourish smart land management including rural areas, landscapes, forests, …) for which the team employs an ecosystem approach.
- The **Centre of Studies for Sustainable Development (CEDD)** is dedicated to research on the political, societal and economic evolutions at the intersection of the environmental and human systems. We anchor our transdisciplinary expertise in a series of research lines including Ecological Economics, STS (Science&Technology Studies) and Environmental Sociology.

BATir

As part of the Ecole Polytech de Bruxelles / Brussels School of Engineering, **the BATir - Building, Architecture & Town Planning (**http://batir.ulb.ac.be) is a multidisciplinary department in charge of research and teaching related to the art of building: construction, architectural engineering, urbanism and regional planning. The scientific staff is about 60 researchers working in the domain of the built environment.

- The research activities of the **chair Sustainable Architecture and Urbanism Lab (SAUL)** are framed by an 'integrated ecosystems' approach for analysis of the issues of sustainability, climate change, and spatial quality at different scales of the built environment, with particular interest in exploring Sustainable Urban Futures, and in order to unfold scale-sensitive and context-specific design, planning and policy responses for addressing the challenges of sustainable development.