

les ateliers

maîtrise d'œuvre urbaine



Call for application

International assistant for the organization of an International Urban Planning Workshop in Tirana, Albania

Mission in Tirana from September until November 2020

1- An original methodology for an urban project in Tirana

Who are Les Ateliers Internationaux de Maîtrise d'Œuvre Urbaine?

- Ü Les Ateliers, a non-profit association created in 1982 by the urban planners of the New Town of Cergy-Pontoise, organizes workshops centred on collective production in support of territorial projects in France and abroad. These workshops offer the opportunity to explore new perspectives and varying scales, to break from administrative restraints and to reinterpret territories with the aim of promoting innovative, creative, relevant, short-term and prospective urban development proposals.
- Ü These workshops bring together students or professionals from all over the world. Working on a volunteer basis, these carefully selected participants work or have backgrounds in an array of disciplines: urban planning, geography, economics, landscape design, sociology, art, engineering, environmental studies, etc.
- Ü Les Ateliers is a tool and a methodology available to cities and their partners to help define an urban development strategy and identify leveraging initiatives. It is also a catalyst for projects as it is supported by a platform of long-term partners.

www.ateliers.org

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Tirana, A city in transformation

Tirana is the political and economic capital of Albania and a thriving city of 850 000 inhabitants. It is a complex and rapidly changing city full of paradoxes. Its lively, chaotic urban fabric reflects its extraordinary history. Having experienced one of the harshest authoritarian regimes of the Cold War period, Albania entered a radical process of change in the 1990s. The last 30 years have been characterized by a transition towards pluralism, democracy and market economy, involving mass urban migration and unregulated capitalism. Consequently, Tirana has experienced an explosive population growth and continues to absorb a steady influx of newcomers from all over Albania. Accounting for a third of the country's total population, Tirana is unsurprisingly marked by an intense densification of existing neighborhoods along with the creation of self built informal suburban patterns in its ever expanding metropolitan region.

Recent administrative reforms have greatly increased the geographical area covered by the municipality of Tirana, amalgamating with surrounding suburban and rural communities. Decision making has also been centralized allowing for urban planning at a much larger scale. Even though there is a lingering skepticism towards projects aimed at the betterment of the public sphere, the city is currently in a very active period of urban regeneration and transformation.

One of the first notable regeneration projects was in the early 2000s when the then mayor of Tirana mandated that communist-era apartment buildings which had become dilapidated, be painted in bright colors and patterns to enliven the city and create civic spirit. Since then, Tirana has seen a series of acclaimed urban and architecture projects designed by renowned international architects. Of particular note is the reimagining in 2017 of Skanderbeg square, an iconic space in Albanian consciousness, as a pedestrian public space. In 2018 Tirana adopted its first urban vision and masterplan since the administrative reforms, Tirana030, designed by Stefano Boeri. It covers not only the city center but also what used to be independent towns and villages at the outskirts of the city, including rural mountainous areas in the periphery. There is also a vision for the main economic corridor of the country, a 30km stretch connecting Tirana to Durrës, a major port town on the Adriatic coast. Further outward, Tirana imagines itself becoming a modern Mediterranean capital and a key link in the economy of the western Balkans.

Challenges

Despite these positive changes and aspirations, it is said that the mayor of Tirana is the mayor of every Albanian's plan B. Plan A is to emigrate abroad. There is some truth to this feeling as evidenced by the high rate of emigration into and out of the city. The reasons behind it are complex. Despite, or because of, its phenomenal growth in the post communist years, recent progress in urban planning, and many eye catching projects that could easily fit in a Western capital, Tirana still faces many pressing issues.

For over two decades there was a proliferation of informal buildings, mainly in the periphery, which are now in the process of legalization but lack the formal urban services and infrastructure. Although Tirana's economic conditions are better than in the provinces, there is still a relatively high unemployment and especially high under-employment as young people from all over Albania flood into the city to study and then search for work. This young and dynamic workforce is also one of Tirana's key advantages. The uncontrolled economic and demographic growth has led to heavily damaged water and green networks and a generally neglected ecology. An inefficient transport system, coupled with an Albanian car culture that views the car as a status symbol, results in severe traffic gridlock which has economic, ecological and health-related consequences. Urban resilience studies call these types of challenges Chronic Stresses — slow moving disasters which have a direct impact on the wellbeing of the city's inhabitants, and also must be addressed in order to minimize impact of unpredictable shocks.

In the past year Tirana has suffered two such shocks. The earthquake of November 2019, whose epicenter was not far from the city, caused significant damage and has left about 2000 families homeless. The municipality responded quickly to move the victims into temporary housing. It was still in the process of examining the full extent of the damage and exploring reconstruction plans when the Covid-19 pandemic arrived also in Albania. The national government responded by imposing a very strict quarantine, shutting down businesses and the teeming cafes and public spaces, which is particularly traumatic for a city and culture where most business and social activity happens in public spaces, cafes, and bars. It's long term effects are still uncertain.

Aims and approach for the international workshop

The combination of these persistent challenges and acute shocks may appear daunting, but in the face of these demanding situations lie opportunities for reimagining the future - a crisis as opportunity. **In this workshop that future will be seen through the lens of Urban Resilience.** It is both a theoretical framework and a goal - a socially, environmentally and economically resilient Tirana.

The workshop will explore **actionable ideas and approaches on repairing the current cracks in the urban fabric, while preparing to sustainably manage the rapid demographic and economic growth** that is expected to continue.

Les Ateliers requires external support for the scientific preparation and organization of these workshop. For Tirana's workshop Les Ateliers will chose two assistants for the workshop.

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2- The Tirana International Urban Planning Workshop preparation process



This mission of the assistant will consist in 5 major tasks:

- **Preparation of Video Meetings programme and partner Committee: September 2020 to end of October 2020**

The 2 assistants will be part of the preparation of video meetings, which Les Ateliers' team and all the local actors of Tirana will meet and work together. The assistant will help Les Ateliers team to prepare the meetings and will take part in all the program. The assistants will get to know all the people and resources they may need in the following periods.

- The selection process of the participants of the international workshops

The assistants will record the applications and assist the team in selecting and contacting applicants, then participants selected, and prepare their venue for the workshop.

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- The elaboration of “the context document”

The assistants, under the control of the director of projects and the two pilots, will collect all information needed to give a global scope of the territory and the issues the participants will deal with. The "Context Document", compiles the most important information and data about the territory. With the support of the Director of project they will prepare of the workshop's program with the team of les Ateliers (logistic, visits and conferences)

- Organization of the logistics and the program of the workshop (most of this task will take place on site from September to end of November)
 - Les Ateliers' team with the two assistants will organize the logistics of the workshop
 - Transportation, hotels for participants and jury members
 - Official meetings, field visits and program of the workshop.
 - Organization of the international jury

The workshop programme: From 7th to 17th Nov 2020

- A programme of visits, meetings and discovery of the territory, as well as round-table discussions during the first 3 days.
 - Then, the participants' group work period will begin.
 - At the end, the work produced by the participants will result in what is called a Session Book. This document will present the participants projects, the programme of visits, the content of the exchanges during the workshop and the Exchange Forum, the composition of the teams and jury, etc. The Session Book is produced by the assistants and it's given to jury members a day in advance.
 - The International Jury: The non-local members of the jury will arrive early in order to meet and become acquainted with the other members of the jury and to participate in sessions dedicated to discovery, work and exchange on the topic and the territory.
 - The Jury Day (last day of the workshop) : The presentation of each team's project will take place in the presence of the international jury and an invited audience, and will include a Q&A session, debates and exchanges between the participants and the jury members.
- Creation of the session book of the workshop under the control of the Director of project (task on site in Tirana from September to November)
 - Production of the "Session Book" (at the end of the session, compiling the participants' projects)

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The 2 assistants will be under the management of the Director of project of Les Ateliers and will be part of a team made of the Director of project and the 2 scientific directors (pilots) of the workshop.

Transportation and accommodation are taken care of for non-local people, and a global compensation will be ensured for this mission (self-employed or trainee contract)

Profile of the assistant:

Young university graduate (or about to graduate), young professional. Urban planner, architect, economist, geographer, landscape architect,... etc.

Autonomous, ability to work in a group and with a close team, curiosity, appetite for discovering new horizons and working in multicultural environments. Fluent speaking and writing English.

Mastering the Indesign software.

To apply, please send to assistants@ateliers.org the following form (Word version here : <https://ateliers.org/en/workshops/224/>) and a resume (CV) until 23 august included.

Application form Assistant - Tirana :

Photo

Family name : _____

First name: _____

Date of birth : _____ Nationality : _____

Postal address : _____

E-mail : _____ Mobile phone : _____

Somebody to contact in case of problem : _____ Tél. : _____

Degrees :

Current situation:

Participation to other collective works: _____

How did you hear about Les Ateliers?

Former participation	
Friend/colleague	
University/professors	
Internet	
Other (please specify)	

Skills (from 0 : nul to 4 : mastery)

LANGUAGES	0	1	2	3	4
French					
English					
Other (please specify)					

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EXPRESSION	0	1	2	3	4
Hand drawing					
Computer drawing					
Writing					
Photo					
Indesign software					

Oral/written presentations					
Other (please specify)					

SPECIFIC SKILLS	0	1	2	3	4
Engineering					
Visual Arts					
Economy					
Design					
Environmental planning					
Public Transport					
Landscape design					
Other (please specify)					

Describe yourself in 80 words (English)