

**Postdoctoral Position in the project «Urban Bricolage. Mining, Designing and Constructing with Reused Building Materials»,
Department of Social Sciences, Unit of Social Anthropology,
University of Fribourg**

Employment: 80 %

Duration: 2 years

Commencement: 1.1.2022 or by arrangement

This position is part of the PRIMA-project «Urban Bricolage. Mining, Designing and Constructing with Reused Building Materials» funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation and led by Prof. Madlen Kobi.

At the intersection of anthropology and architecture, the project investigates the everyday resistances when handling reused materials in selected European countries to optimize the circular economy of building construction. The project enquires into the practical problems that scrap dealers, middlemen, architects, engineers, digital experts, company owners, and carpenters face when working with reused materials. It combines architectural debates on the technical possibilities, aesthetic reconfiguration, and material transformability of reused materials with an actor-centered approach on human-material relations. Beyond the academic output, the project engages in public activities in order to help optimizing circular processes in Switzerland and beyond.

Job description:

- You will develop an independent research project on reusing building materials in architecture. This subproject ideally investigates with ethnographic fieldwork the reuse challenges on the demolition site in Belgium (or the Netherlands or Germany) in order to inquire how reusable materials are being tracked and technically dismantled from buildings. Apart from the tracing of materials, the subproject will engage with the complex labor situation when components are deconstructed manually. This will provide important evidence on the socio-economic context of demolition work in Europe, such as how and where laborers are recruited, what skills they are expected to have, and what kind of everyday practices shape their disassembling work.
- Outcomes: Two peer-reviewed articles; three conference or workshop contributions; min. five podcast episodes; co-editorship of a special issue of a peer-reviewed journal.
- Active involvement in the activities of the department (teaching, colloquia, participation in media presence incl. social media and website)
- Collaboration in the organization of events, podcast and workshops related to the project

Requirements:

- PhD in Social Anthropology, Architecture or any related discipline.

- Research experience at the intersection of anthropology and architecture with an expertise on circular economy, infrastructure, material culture, urban development and/or human-environment relationships desired.
- Experience in ethnographic research.
- Experience in science communication to an audience beyond academia, for example through podcasts, blogs, newspaper articles or social media.
- Flair for team work and communication.
- Language proficiency in English, German, French and other research-relevant languages.
- Residency in Fribourg or elsewhere in Switzerland for the duration of the contract.

Contact person:

Madlen Kobi, madlen.kobi@usi.ch

Application deadline:

October 15, 2021. Please submit your application documents in one PDF to madlen.kobi@usi.ch

Application documents:

- Cover letter, incl. name and contact of two reference persons
- Short description of the planned project (1 page)
- Curriculum Vitae
- Sample work, e.g. PhD thesis, academic article, other publication(s), audio-visual work
- PhD diploma