

PhD studentship (Full-time)

Institution	Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, China
School	Design School
Supervisors	Principal supervisor: Professor Joon Sik Kim (XJTLU) Co-supervisor: Professor David Shaw (UoL)
Application Deadline	Open until the position is filled
Funding Availability	Funded PhD project (world-wide students)
Project Title	Barriers and Opportunities of Regional Planning Collaboration in China: Mapping Subjective Landscape in Implementing Integrated Watershed Revitalisation in the Yangtze River Delta
Contact	Please email joon.kim@xjtlu.edu.cn (XJTLU principal supervisor's email address) with a subject line of the PhD project title

Requirements:

The candidate should have a first class or upper second class honours degree, or a master's degree (or equivalent qualification), in a field related to urban planning and design with evidence of good spoken and written English. Fluent Chinese language skills are also essential due to the nature of the research project involving data collection and surveys with local Chinese professionals. The candidate should have an IELTS score of 6.5 or above, if the first language is not English. This position is open to all qualified candidates, irrespective of nationality.

Degree:

The student will be awarded a PhD degree from the University of Liverpool (UK) upon successful completion of the program.

Funding:

The PhD studentship is available for three years' subject to satisfactory progress by the student. The award covers tuition fees for three years (currently equivalent to RMB 99,000 per annum) and provides a monthly stipend of 5,000 RMB as a contribution to living expenses. It also provides up to RMB 16,500 to allow participation at international conferences during the period of the award. It is a condition of the award that holders of XJTLU PhD scholarships carry out 300-500 hours of teaching assistance work per year. The scholarship holder is expected to carry out the major part of his or her

research at XJTLU in Suzhou, China. However, he or she is eligible for a research study visit to the University of Liverpool of up to six months, if this is required by the project.

Project Description:

The research aims to develop a holistic set of policy recommendations to eliminate the identified barriers and improve regional collaboration implementation in China, with a concrete example of the Yangtze River Delta (YRD). In particular, no clear consensus yet exists on many aspects involving China's regional planning collaboration, as it is still an evolving field. State Council called for a new governance model in YRD requiring close collaboration among neighboring administrative regions. Despite the drive from the central, local governments face the complex challenge of achieving a cross-governmental collaboration by managing contrasting views, interests, and conflicts in real-life contexts. The research uses Q methodology to measure the different perspectives and subjective opinions. The insights gained from this study may assist in enhancing a multiplicity of implementation processes to deal with the complexity and dynamics involved in regional collaboration in YRD.

This project further focuses on the practitioner's perspective and attitude in implementing regional collaboration and highlights lessons from their experience in the planning practice. The study of practitioners' views and perspectives is critical because the attitudes of professionals and policymakers may strongly impact development strategies and directions, especially when no consensus is built on this emerging issue. The overarching research questions are: "What barriers do the integrated YRD management present to the planning practitioners with respect to understanding the differences in issue identifications, political priorities, and prospective solutions?" and "How can these barriers be overcome?"

The YRD Demonstration Zone in China has been chosen as a case study. This is an attempt to promote more focused efforts rather than to cover wider-ranging planning practice, as a certain geographical boundary helps focus on particular issues and emphasizes area-based targets. The complexity of regional collaboration will be augmented by qualitative analysis through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and Q methodology to measure the different perspectives and develop new ideas learning from YRD practitioners.

For more information about doctoral scholarship and PhD programme at Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University (XJTLU): Please visit

<https://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/en/admissions/global/entry-requirements/>

<https://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/en/admissions/global/fees-and-scholarship>

How to Apply:

Interested applicants are advised to email joon.kim@xjtlu.edu.cn (XJTLU principal supervisor's email address) the following documents for initial review and assessment (please put the project title in the subject line).

- CV
- Two reference letters with company/university letterhead
- Personal statement outlining your interest in the position
- Proof of English language proficiency (an IELTS score of 6.5 or above)
- Verified school transcripts in both Chinese and English (for international students, only the English version is required)
- Verified certificates of education qualifications in both Chinese and English (for international students, only the English version is required)
- PDF copy of Master Degree dissertation (or an equivalent writing sample) and examiners reports available

Informal enquiries may be addressed to Professor Joon Sik Kim (joon.kim@xjtlu.edu.cn), whose personal profile is linked below, <https://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/en/study/departments/design-school/urban-planning-and-design/department-staff/academic-staff/staff/joon-kim>