

responsible

swiss responses
to housing in
socio-ecological crisis

city

Lunch Lecture

The Responsible City Lunch Lecture

In the opening decades of the 21st century, cities have increasingly been threatened by socio-ecological crises that have triggered controversies around how to negotiate the trade-offs between environmental goals and questions of social justice. The Responsible City aims to understand how cities respond to socio-ecological controversies in housing. In this online lecture series, we seek to discuss the project's key research concerns: the grammars of responsibility that guide housing controversies, the ways in which they are put into action by planners, real estate actors, tenants or urban communities, how they shape the urban fabric, and how they can be transformed into a politics of transition.

Mar

18.3.2026, 12:30-13:30 CET | [Online](#) → [Zoom Link](#)
Dr. Melissa García-Lamarca, Lund University
Housing decarbonisation and radical housing repair

Apr

15.4.2026, 16:00 – 17:00 CET | [Online](#) → [Zoom Link](#)
Dr. Desiree Fields, University of California, Berkeley
**Digital experiments with landed property:
Robots, race, and rent**

May

6.5.2026, 12:30 – 13:30 CET | [Online](#) → [Zoom Link](#)
Dr. Cody Hochstenbach, University of Amsterdam
Socio-ecological inequalities in housing consumption

Organized by the Research Units:

- Social Geography and Urban Studies, UZH
- Laboratory of Urban Sociology, EPFL
- Institute of Geography, UniNe
- Spatial Development and Urban Policy, ETH-Z



Wed,
18.3.
2026

12:30-13:30
CET

Dr. Melissa García-Lamarca, Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies, Lund, Sweden

Housing decarbonisation and radical housing repair

In recent years, debates over environmental and power relations in/through the home have become increasingly urgent, particularly as housing decarbonization has emerged as a political priority. In her work, Dr. Melissa García-Lamarca approaches these issues from an urban political ecologies perspective, formulating a theoretical and political proposal of radical housing repair. In this lunch lecture, she will build on this conceptual work concerning pathways of housing decarbonization and on empirical analyses of its political economy in Spain. By approaching these issues as inherently political, Dr. García-Lamarca's work speaks directly to the socio-ecological controversies at the heart of the responsible city project. [Online → Zoom Link](#)

Wed,
15.4.
2026

16:00-17:00
CET

Dr. Desiree Fields, University of California, Berkeley

Digital experiments with landed property: Robots, race, and rent

A wide range of digital innovations has changed property relations globally over the past fifteen years. What are we to make of these digital experiments with landed property? Their technological novelty does not break with the geographic and historical specificities of property relations: technological progress has long been fundamental to how relationships to land are constituted and reconstituted according to dominant interests. In this talk, Dr. Desiree Fields situates 21st century housing market technologies within sedimented relations of landed property in the United States to show how property innovation in the US has furthered racialized wealth accumulation and dispossession. She interprets current anxieties about "robot landlords" as anxieties about how the shifting landscape of property ownership appears to threaten the economic benefits associated with racial dominance. [Online → Zoom Link](#)

Wed,
6.5.
2026

12:30 – 13:30
CET

Dr. Cody Hochstenbach, Urban Geography, University of Amsterdam

Socio-ecological inequalities in housing consumption

Over the past few decades, housing provision has been a global concern, with housing remaining a primary site where social and ecological inequalities intersect. In this lunch lecture, Dr. Cody Hochstenbach draws on recent research in the Netherlands to explore the unequal distribution of the ways in which socio-economic status, physical properties and the urban context affect the overall carbon footprint. Using household-level registry data, the study reveals inequalities in housing consumption, showing significant differences in carbon footprint between high- and low-income households. Additionally, mobility emissions are driven by low-density neighborhoods and high-income households. Together, these findings reveal potential pathways to providing socially just and environmentally friendly housing. [Online → Zoom Link](#)