



PARIS TRANSFORMATIONS V

SOCIAL HOUSING

12-19 July 2026

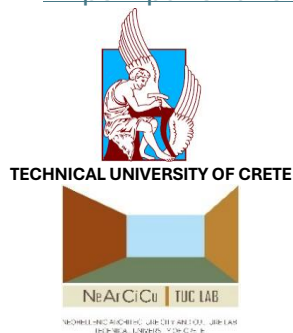
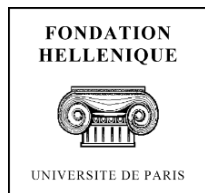
PARIS

SCIENTIFIC ORGANISATION

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PRESENTATION

Following four successful annual summer school events with the general title PARIS TRANSFORMATIONS (2022 Paris Transformations I: Architectural, Urban, Metropolitan; 2023 Paris Transformations II: Landscape, Gardens, Urban Parks; 2024 Paris Transformations III: Places of spectacle; 2025 Paris Transformations IV: Places of Fashion), we are pleased to launch the fifth event in the series for the year 2026, entitled PARIS TRANSFORMATIONS V: SOCIAL HOUSING

For further information: <https://paristransformations.cargo.site/>

Social Housing in Paris, an architectural and social laboratory

Since the 19th century, social housing has been a critical component of architectural and urban planning practice in addressing the housing crisis caused by the Industrial Revolution and rapid urbanization. From the famous Familistère de Guise¹, the first workers' housing in Napoleon's Paris² to the utopian models of socialist thinkers and the radical proposals of the interwar period, social housing has been a means of social policy and an object of urban and architectural experimentation in France. The design and typology of social housing has been shaped by the architectural, ideological, political, and technological conditions of each era.

The above is clearly expressed by the establishment of Paris Habitat, a public body founded 131 years ago in Paris, which still manages social housing in the city today. Its name has been closely associated with social housing since 1894, with the creation of the HBM (Habitations à Bon Marché) to now manage a rich and historic building stock that is also a cultural heritage. Before World War I, social housing was mostly the result of initiatives by philanthropists and the hygienists, often through foundations³, most of whose designs were first prizes in architectural competitions.

The year 1919 marks a turning point in the issue of social housing in Paris, as it coincides with the decision to demolish the city walls, resulting in a huge area (the former undeveloped military zone) was transferred to the State and used mainly for the construction of social housing complexes. This peripheral zone, with its

¹ www.famisltere.com/fr

² <https://culturezvous.com/en/cite-napoleon-story-working-class-housing-paris/>

³ the Rothschild Foundation built the social housing complexes: Les [HBM Rue du Marché Popincourt](#) (1907), Les [HBM Rue de Belleville](#) (1908), Les [HBM Rue de Prague](#) (1909), Les [HBM Rue Bargue](#) (1912), Les HBM Rue Marcadet (1913-1919)

social housing complexes of a common architectural expression, constitutes, after Haussmann, the second "identity image" of Paris. Between 1921 and 1939, 58,500 HBM dwellings were built.

Ensuring sanitary conditions for the middle and lower social classes remained a primary goal and found its ultimate expression in the emblematic complex at Rue des Amiraux in the 18th district, (1927, arch. Henri Sauvage), which is built around an indoor communal swimming pool⁴.

Between 1920 and 1930, many social housing complexes were built in the greater Paris area, Seine-et-Oise, and Seine-et-Marne.

There are also cases of successive expansions of social housing complexes that began as garden cities and gradually evolved into huge residential developments of particular architectural and urban planning interest, such as the garden city of [Saint Gervais in Pantin](#), developed between 1927 and 1952.

Between 1953-1973, the population explosion, exacerbated by the arrival of immigrants, led to the construction of large-scale complexes for collective housing (such as [La Caravelle à Villeneuve-la Garenne](#) complex, in Hauts-de-Seine, built in 1959 -1967 by the architect J. Dubuisson), the social housing complexes in Argenteuil, Sarcelles, La Courneuve, Bagneux, Aubervilliers, Creteil, Montreuil, Les Carreaux in Villiers Le Bel, etc. These gigantic complexes are a key urban planning component in the creation of the "suburbs" of Paris, the well-known "banlieues," which are accompanied by extensive political, social, and artistic references. At the same time, the giant residential building [Mouchotte](#) by the arch. J. Dubuisson) was built as part of the urban redevelopment of the Montparnasse railway station.

Contemporary transformations of the Social Housing buildings stock

With an average age of 67 years, this building stock, which includes more than 128,000 dwellings, is characterized by architectural and urban diversity and is a testament to the provision of social housing. Paris Habitat has been involved from very early on in issues of preservation, adaptation, and conversion of this heritage, committed to a "green" city and aiming to improve the comfort and living environment of the residents.

The concept of social housing today differs significantly from how it was approached in the past, both in terms of its definition and its scope and objectives. Its shortage is one of the major problems facing Paris, as it is for most cities, and is

⁴ Restored in 2017 by [Chatillon Architectes](#).

becoming more acute in the face of the contemporary challenges of globalisation, the economic and climate crisis, immigration and refugee movements, and the COVID-19 pandemic, which have once again highlighted housing as an issue of social justice and politics.

In the 21st century, social housing in Paris is re-emerging as a field of innovative interventions with strong architectural and urban planning interest, where the practice of transformation is proving particularly popular.

As mentioned above, social housing complexes from the 19th and early 20th centuries are being transformed to meet contemporary housing requirements. A typical example is the [conversion of a large-scale complex](#) (129 m long) for social housing in Jussieu (5e) into a complex of 600 student residences.

Internationally renowned are the works of architects Lacaton & Vassal⁵ and Frederic Druot, who declare their commitment to the conversion rather than demolition of existing buildings, particularly social housing complexes. Among them is the [Tour Bois le Prêtre – \(Paris 17th district\)](#), also known as Alcatraz, which involves the conversion of a tall building for social housing from the 1960s into a modernized complex for the same use. Similar projects are also underway at the [La Courneuve complex](#).

Responding to increasing social housing needs by transforming existing buildings

However, the transformations are not limited to existing complexes of the same use, but often involve the reuse of 19th century buildings or even older ones initially built for completely different purposes. Among them are former industrial facilities (e.g., [Hall Pujol](#), a conversion of railway support facilities into a multi-use complex that includes social housing), railway stations and infrastructure (e.g., the conversion of the Batignolles station into [Martin Luther King 17th district park](#)), along with residential complexes and social housing, hospitals (e.g. the conversion of the 19th-century [Saint Vincent de Paul](#) hospital into an eco- neighborhood⁶), office buildings, post offices (e.g., La [Poste du Louvre](#), the conversion of the old post office into a multi-purpose complex that includes social housing), fire stations and police stations from the 19th century. (e.g., [Caserne des Minimes](#), and [Caserne Exelmans](#)).

⁵ Pritzker Prize for social housing www.lacatonvassal.com

⁶ See also: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3bGDQ7cgmVw>

The decline in inner city car use has freed up large parking spaces for new uses, often including social housing. A typical example is the conversion of the [garage that belonged to the Van Loo](#) (1958) into a social housing building - prefabricated wooden structures (arch. Atelier WRA) and a [garage at 43, rue Laborde \(8e\)](#) (arch. GENS) into social housing, while sometimes garages are demolished to make way for social housing buildings. (e.g. the transformation of the [Jean-Nicot passage \(7th district\)](#)).

The search for social housing space is also reinforced by the SRU Law (Lois Solidarite et Renouvellement Urbain), which since 2000 has required every new construction to allocate approximately 18% of its floor space to social housing. Thus, we see social housing being integrated into complexes with diverse uses, such as the historic department store [Samaritaine](#) into a [complex](#) which includes retail space, a hotel, offices, and social housing.

Urban transformations in Paris including social Housing

In an effort to address the critical issue of social housing in Paris, plans were made for the use of new facilities after the 2024 Olympic Games, focusing on the [Saint Denis area](#) where the decision to convert them into social housing prevailed, leading to not only architectural but also urban planning transformations.



The Tour Bois le Prêtre - Paris 17e, known as Alcatraz, involving the conversion of a tall building for social housing from 1960 into a modernized complex.



The former Saint-Vincent de Paul Hospital has been transformed into a mixed-use neighbourhood with shops, cultural facilities, a school and a nursery.



Development of the Martin Luther King park

The Summer School will present all the facets of this complex, both historic, social, and extremely innovative social housing landscape of Paris. Understanding social housing as an important factor of urban and metropolitan transformations, the summer school will alternate field visits and in-room conferences by experts, during a full one-week program.

GENERAL STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

(THE FINAL PROGRAMME, INCLUDINGG MOST OF THE PLACES MENTIONNED ABOVE, WILL BE PUBLISHED IN MARCH 2026)

Sunday July 12 th	Monday July 13 th	Tuesday July 14 th	Wedn., July 15 th	Thursday July 16 th	Friday July 17 th	Saturday July 18 th	Sunday July 19 th
Arrival in Paris and accommodation at the Hellenic Foundation	General presentation of the seminar	All day excursion to Social housing projects near Paris	Lectures	Lectures	Lectures	Final presentation of the collective work Farewell diner in Parsian Restaurant	End of the Summer School and Departures
Visit to the Cité Internationale Universitaire	Visit 1		Visit 3	Visit 4	Visit 5		
Cocktail reception at the Hellenic Foundation	Free Diner		Free Diner	Free Diner	Free Diner		
	July 14 th celebrations						

ELIGIBILITY AND EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The Summer School is addressed to students of architecture, theatre studies and scenography (undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD level) as well as to young architects who have graduated after 2023.

- Applicants should have a good knowledge of the city's history and architecture.
- A good level in English is essential
- Knowledge of French will be highly appreciated.

Applicants are invited to submit the following documents **in a single PDF**:

- Application form
- Letter of motivation explaining precisely how the Summer School will contribute to the study project or the professional career of the candidates.
- Letter of recommendation from a professor at higher education.
- CV
- Portfolio with three works (drawings, architectural projects, architectural works, collages, photos, texts), related to the theme of urban transformations

- Deadline for submission of supporting documents FRIDAY 3 April 2026

The PDF with all the supporting documents will be submitted to *Fondation.hellenique.adm@wanadoo.fr* with the title of the mail "ECOLE D'ETE TRANSFORMATIONS".

Shortlisted candidates will be notified by 17 April 2026.

PARTICIPATION COST

The cost of participation is **850 euros** including:

- 7 nights in a single room (15sqm with private bathroom and kitchenette) at the *Fondation Hellénique* – "Greek house" or equivalent in the Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris.
- 6 meals - buffet at the seminar lecture venue - 1 cocktail (welcome reception)
- 1 dinner in a typical Parisian restaurant;
- 1 weekly metro card covering all travels in Paris and Paris region
- Participation in all program visits and museum entrances
- Attendance of lectures by distinguished speakers
- Organization of the seminar, venues, premises and consumables for the workshop

The amount of **850 euros** does not include

The travel to and from Paris (air tickets, train tickets, etc.)

The tickets from the airport to the city

Personal expenses

The participation fee must be paid in two instalments:

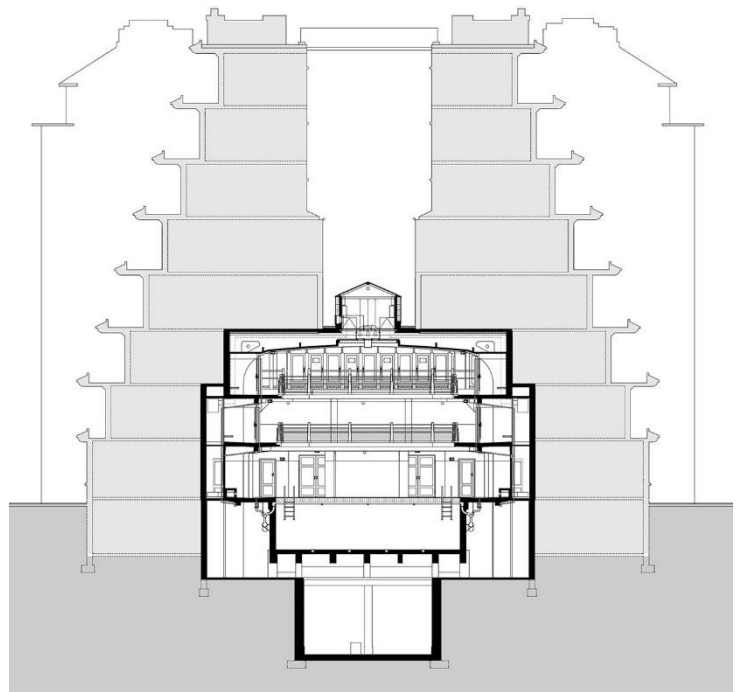
450 euros until 6 May 2026

400 euros until 1st June 2026 to the bank account of *Fondation Hellénique*.

In case of cancellation of the participation for serious reasons before May 25th 2026, the 450 euros will be refunded. There will be no refund after May 25th.

CONDITIONS FOR VALIDATING THE SUMMER SCHOOL AND OBTAINING THE CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION

The seminar will be conducted in English. Successful attendance of the summer seminar requires regular and active participation in the whole program and the workshop it includes. In addition, participants are invited to submit, no later than one month after the completion of the seminar, a project with reference to the theme of the seminar (text, architectural design, sketch, photographs, collage, etc.) which they will have already presented as an initial idea during the seminar and, once completed, will be included in a publication. At the end of the seminar a certificate of participation will be given to those who have successfully participated in the program, which will correspond to **3 ECTS**.



The Piscine des Amiraux (Amiraux swimming pool), one of the first public swimming pools of Paris, in a social housing building in the 1920s by Henri Sauvage (1873-1932). It encompasses all the results of his research on sunlight and “good air” for housing projects. Renovation: Chatillon architects

SUMMER SCHOOL LOCATIONS

The PARIS TRANSFORMATIONS Summer School will take place at the **Hellenic Foundation of the Cité Internationale Universitaire**⁷ de Paris. The Hellenic Foundation⁸ is an institution with a long history as a place of life and memory of researchers, artists, architects, Greek intellectuals. It has hosted, among others, architects such as Takis Zenetos, Georges Candilis, Aristomenis Provellegios, Yannis Tsiomis etc.

The Hellenic Foundation is located in a 34-hectare campus located in the south of Paris, very accessible by public transport. The campus is an open-air museum of 20th century architecture, with works by Le Corbusier, Lucio Costa, Claude Parent, Dudock, etc.

The building, designed by the architect Nicolas Zahos and inaugurated during the interwar period, combines a neoclassical style with Art Deco references. The Hellenic Foundation was entirely renovated in 2021 and all of its rooms have private shower rooms, toilets and kitchenettes.



The Campus of the Cité Internationale



The building of the Fondation Hellénique

CONTACTS

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<https://paristransformations.cargo.site/>

⁷www.ciup.fr

⁸www.fondation-hellenique.fr