



PARIS TRANSFORMATIONS VI

STUDENT SPACES:

UNIVERSITIES, HOUSING, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES
AND EVERYDAY STUDENT LIFE SPACES IN METROPOLITAN PARIS

11-18 July 2027 - PARIS

SCIENTIFIC ORGANISATION

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



école nationale
supérieure
d'architecture
de **paris-belleville**



Since its creation, the *Paris Transformations* Summer School has explored the ways in which Paris continuously reinvents itself through the transformation of its built environment. Each edition has focused on a particular urban ecosystem—metropolitan territories, gardens, fashion districts, of spectacle or social housing—not simply as architectural objects but as expressions of broader social, economic and political change. Following five 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; 2026 Paris Transformations V: Social Housing), we are pleased to launch the sixth event in the series for the year 2027.

STUDENT SPACES: UNIVERSITIES, HOUSING, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES AND EVERYDAY STUDENT LIFE SPACES IN METROPOLITAN PARIS

The sixth edition turns to another fundamental yet often overlooked dimension of the metropolitan fabric: the places of student life.

Few European cities are as deeply shaped by higher education as Paris. Home to hundreds of thousands of students, dozens of universities and Grandes écoles, internationally renowned research centers and one of the world's oldest academic traditions, the Paris metropolitan area is simultaneously a city of knowledge production and a city transformed by knowledge. Universities have never been static institutions. They have constantly adapted to demographic growth, scientific revolutions, changing pedagogies, internationalization, digital technologies, environmental imperatives and new expectations regarding student wellbeing. These transformations have left a profound imprint on the urban landscape.

Rather than studying universities as isolated institutions, this Summer School proposes to examine the entire ecosystem of places that support student life: university campuses, historic faculties, libraries, laboratories, student residences, cafeterias, cultural venues, public spaces and everyday infrastructures. Together, these spaces form a complex geography whose evolution reflects changing conceptions of education, research and urban life.

The emphasis of the program is deliberately placed on the transformation of existing places. Paris is not a city that expands primarily through the construction of entirely new university districts. Instead, constrained by its dense urban fabric and extraordinary architectural heritage, it constantly reinvents existing buildings and neighborhoods. Former industrial sites become research campuses; obsolete university buildings are rehabilitated to meet contemporary environmental standards; historic colleges are adapted to digital teaching; student residences are modernized to respond to new lifestyles; libraries become collaborative learning environments; and university restaurants evolve into multifunctional social spaces. Understanding these processes means understanding how metropolises such as Paris adapt without erasing their inherited urban fabric.

This perspective is particularly relevant today because higher education itself is undergoing profound transformations. Universities are becoming increasingly international, interdisciplinary and digitally connected. Teaching methods increasingly privilege collaborative work over traditional lectures. Laboratories require new forms of technological infrastructure. Climate change imposes ambitious energy renovations on ageing campuses. Student mental health and wellbeing have become central concerns, encouraging the creation of more inclusive and welcoming environments. Finally, the experience of the Covid-19 pandemic accelerated reflections on hybrid learning, flexible spaces and the relationship between physical presence and digital education. These institutional changes inevitably translate into spatial transformations.

Paris offers an exceptional laboratory for observing these dynamics.

One of the most significant recent examples is the development of the Campus Condorcet ([arch. Françoise Mauffret and Jean Guervilly](#)), illustrates how higher education participates in the regeneration of formerly peripheral metropolitan areas. While its principal site was established in Aubervilliers, the opening of the new La Chapelle campus in northern Paris represents one of the largest university developments within the city for decades. Built on a former railway site at Porte de la Chapelle, the project combines teaching spaces, libraries, student services, restaurants and public areas while contributing to the broader transformation of a neighborhood long characterized by industrial and transport infrastructures. The campus demonstrates how contemporary university architecture increasingly functions as an urban project, integrating environmental performance, accessibility and mixed uses rather than remaining enclosed behind institutional boundaries.

In the center of the city, an emblematic example is the continuing transformation of the [historic Jussieu campus](#) (arch. Jean Nouvel), today part of Sorbonne Université. Originally conceived during the era of mass higher education in the 1960s and 1970s, the campus has undergone successive waves of rehabilitation, first through the complex removal of asbestos and more recently through programs aimed at improving environmental performance and student life. Buildings that once housed laboratories and offices are being transformed into new student residences ([arch. Abinal & Ropars](#)), renovated university restaurants, sports facilities and social spaces illustrate how the challenge is no longer merely preserving iconic modernist architecture but adapting it to contemporary academic practices and environmental expectations.

Of particular interest as examples of the conversion of historic buildings are schools of architecture and other arts, such as the [Belleville School of Architecture](#), housed in a secondary school built in 1913 by the architect Antonin Durand and refurbished by Jean-Paul Philippon, the Villette School of Architecture, which was originally an industrial warehouse and ceramics factory before being converted into a school of architecture in the 1970s, Paris Malaquais, which is housed in a building that evolved from a monastery into a museum and subsequently into a school of fine arts and architecture. As well as [the Institut Français de la Mode et du Design](#) (arch. Patrick Mauger) which is the conversion of a concrete warehouse on the banks of the Seine; the [National Dance Centre in Pantin](#), which is the conversion of an administrative building (arch. A. Robain, Cl. Guiéyre), as well as spaces at the Opéra Garnier that have been converted into the Opera's dance school and library. The same applies to venues for music education, such as the Salle Cortot (architect: A. Perret), the pioneering conservatoire in Montreuil (architect: Claude Le Goas) following its recent refurbishment, as well as the [National Conservatoire](#) (architect Chr. De Portzamparc), which is not a conversion of an existing building but forms part of the redevelopment of a large site of former abattoirs in the well-known Parc de La Villette, of which the building is an integral part.

Student housing provides another particularly fertile field of investigation. Paris faces one of Europe's most acute housing crises, making access to affordable accommodation one of the defining dimensions of student experience. This has stimulated numerous rehabilitation projects involving CROUS residences, adaptive reuse of existing buildings and the continuous evolution of the [Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris](#). Originally conceived in the interwar period as an international campus promoting peace through academic exchange, the Cité has progressively transformed into a living laboratory of international mobility, architectural heritage and contemporary sustainability. Successive renovations seek to reconcile heritage preservation with new standards of accessibility, energy efficiency and student comfort. Student accommodation is also very often included in social housing complexes often involving a combination of uses ([e.g arch. RH+](#)).

Equally revealing are the transformations of university libraries. No longer conceived primarily as repositories of books, libraries increasingly function as collective workspaces, digital laboratories, social environments and cultural venues. Their architecture reflects changing pedagogical philosophies in which informal learning, interdisciplinary collaboration and extended opening hours become as important as traditional collections. Very often, libraries are aimed at the general public. Among them, we might mention the renovation and transformation of the historic [National Library of France](#), with its

famous Labrousse Hall, [the Sainte-Geneviève Library](#) by the same architect, as well as the historic library of the Faculty of Medicine, and the transformation of the prison Saint Lazare into the [Françoise Sagan media library](#) (arch. Antoine Mortemard).

Student restaurants and cafeterias have experienced similar evolutions. Beyond their original welfare function, they increasingly operate as social infrastructures that contribute to campus life, cultural diversity and everyday conviviality, an example of this is the recent transformation of the [College des Bernardins](#), a 13th-century building which is also open to the public (arch. H. Baptiste and Wilmotte & ass.). Their renovation often reflects broader concerns regarding sustainability, local food systems, circular economies and public health. These apparently ordinary places reveal how student life itself has become an object of urban and institutional design.

Laboratories constitute another essential dimension of this changing geography. Scientific research increasingly depends upon flexible spaces capable of accommodating rapidly evolving technologies and interdisciplinary collaborations. Historic laboratory buildings (such as the Pavillon Curie of the Radium Institute) are therefore continuously adapted, expanded or reorganized to meet new scientific requirements while respecting architectural and environmental constraints. Their evolution illustrates the close relationship between knowledge production and the transformation of the built environment.

The metropolitan scale is equally important. During recent decades, the geography of higher education has progressively expanded beyond the historic center of Paris towards neighboring municipalities. Campuses in Aubervilliers ([Campus Condorcet](#)), Saint-Denis, Saclay or Ivry-sur-Seine demonstrate how universities have become powerful actors of metropolitan restructuring. These developments raise important questions concerning accessibility, student mobility, social integration, relations with local communities and the emergence of new urban centralities. Universities do not merely occupy metropolitan territories; they actively participate in producing them.

This spatial expansion also invites reflection on the relationship between universities and surrounding neighborhoods. Contemporary campuses are increasingly conceived as porous environments connected to public transport, cultural facilities, local commerce and public spaces. The distinction between "university" and "city" becomes progressively blurred as campuses evolve into mixed urban districts inhabited not only by students and researchers but also by local residents, entrepreneurs and visitors.

The transformation of student spaces also needs to be understood within the broader urban process of "studentification", it contributes to reshaping neighborhoods through the growing demand for student accommodation, the diversification of commercial services, the emergence of new co-living and co-working spaces, and changing patterns of urban sociability.

The Summer School therefore proposes to analyze student spaces not simply as educational facilities but as places where broader urban transformations become visible. Questions of heritage conservation, adaptive reuse, sustainability, housing affordability, social inclusion, international mobility, metropolitan governance and climate adaptation all converge within these everyday environments. The university becomes a privileged observatory through which to understand how contemporary cities negotiate continuity and change.

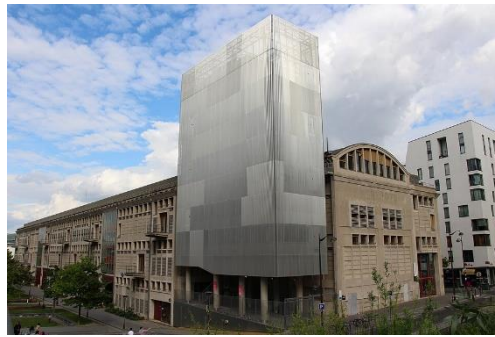
More fundamentally, studying the transformation of student spaces also means recognizing that universities are not only institutions that produce knowledge. They produce urbanity, in the sense that they shape neighborhoods, create daily mobilities, influence housing markets, stimulate cultural activities and contribute to the identity of entire districts.

By focusing on these reciprocal transformations, the sixth edition of the Paris Transformations Summer School seeks to move beyond conventional analyses of higher education. It invites participants to explore the university as a dynamic urban ecosystem whose buildings, infrastructures and everyday places reveal the evolving relationship between knowledge, society and the contemporary metropolis.

Rather than treating studentification as merely a demographic or housing phenomenon, the program approaches it as a spatial and architectural process in which the adaptation of existing places both reflects and actively shapes the future of university life. Paris, with its exceptional combination of historic academic institutions, ambitious rehabilitation projects and expanding metropolitan campuses, offers an unparalleled field laboratory for examining these intertwined transformations.



Campus of Sorbonne Nouvelle, à Nation, Paris, by Christian de Portzamparc © Nicolas Borel



Paris-Diderot University installed in the Former Halle aux Farines, renovated by Nicolas Michelin (2007).



School of Architecture Paris-Belleville Housed in a secondary school built in 1913 by the architect Antonin Durand, and refurbished by Jean-Paul Philippon



Perspective du Campus Porte de la Chapelle © Ville de Paris



Ecole d'Architecture Val de Seine, Grands Moulins de Paris

The Summer School will present all the facets of this complex, both historic, social, and extremely innovative student and study landscape of Paris. Understanding student spaces 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 2027)

Sunday July 11 th	Monday July 12 th	Tuesday July 13 th	Wedn., July 14 th	Thursday July 15 th	Friday July 16 th	Saturday July 17 th	Sunday July 18 th
Arrival in Paris and accommodation at the Hellenic Foundation	Lectures	Lectures	WS	Lectures	Lectures	Final presentation of the collective work	End of the Summer School and Departure.
Visit to the Cité Internationale Universitaire	Visit 1	Visit 2	WS	Visit 3	Visit 4		
Cocktail reception at the Hellenic Foundation	Free Diner	July 14 th celebration s	Free Diner	Free Diner	Free Diner	Farewell diner in Parisian Restaurant	

ELIGIBILITY AND EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The Summer School is addressed to students of architecture, urban planning, design, social sciences (geography, sociology, political sciences...) (undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD level) as well as to young architects and who have graduated after 2025.

- 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 2 April 2027

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 16 April 2027.

PARTICIPATION COST

The cost of participation is **870 euros** including:

- 7 nights in a single room (15sqm with private bathroom) 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 **870 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:

470 euros until 7 May 2027

400 euros until 1st June 2027 to the bank account of *Fondation Hellénique*.

In case of cancellation of the participation for serious reasons before May 25th 2027, the 470 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**.

SUMMER SCHOOL LOCATIONS

The PARIS TRANSFORMATIONS Summer School will take place at the **Hellenic Foundation of the Cité Internationale Universitaire**¹ de Paris. The Hellenic Foundation² 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.

¹www.ciup.fr

²www.fondation-hellenique.fr

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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