



# Research Fellowship in the Built Environment

## Biome-positive urbanism: Designing the caring city

£50k per year for 2 years | Closing Date for applications 15 September 2026

### Purpose

The Fellowship requires the creation of **a tangible blueprint for caring, biome-positive urbanism**, translating principles into spatial form. We seek to move these strategies from the “start-up space“ into the mainstream of the built environment.

In his book “The Care Economy”, Tim Jackson argues that prosperity should be centred on health and care rather than economic growth. Society must treat the “health” of itself, and of the individuals and ecosystems within it as serious structural goals.

The purpose of the Fellowship is to demonstrate how cities can act as *caring systems* – supporting human biomes, ecological health, social connection and everyday wellbeing – to produce practical design tools or well-founded strategic thinking which will allow real places to embed “care” as an organising principle.

### Output

Fellows should deliver at least one major output that is adoptable by others in the field. Applicants may consider this from any perspective; mitigating negative city impacts such as loneliness, stress or poverty; or creating positive benefits through opportunity, habitat, and well-being.

Here are some possible examples:

#### 1. The Caring City Design Manual

- A beautifully produced handbook for planners, designers and policymakers.

- Explicitly frames urban design as an infrastructure of care.
  - Outlines design principles, metrics, benchmarks, and biome-positive strategies.
- 2. Pilot Interventions & Evaluations (1–3 prototypes)**
- Real-world or prototype trials (e.g., a microbial-supportive streetscape, a playable wild micro-park).
  - Includes monitoring, feedback and dissemination: health effects, biodiversity shifts, community behaviour.
- 3. A Spatial Framework for a Care-Centred Neighbourhood**
- A masterplan or design framework that integrates:
    - microbiome-positive planting
    - wild play
    - care infrastructure
    - community resilience
    - interspecies design
  - In consultation for adoption by local, regional or central authorities.
- 4. A Major Public Facing Exhibition or Urban Demonstrator**
- A significant public exhibition, toolkit or digital atlas mapping:
    - How care manifests spatially
    - How cities can nurture bodies, minds, microbes, and ecosystems
    - Applicants would be expected to provide evidence of demonstrator host or venue

These are simply illustrative examples and should not be taken to constrain possible applications in any way. We would welcome all and any responses that map to the overarching purpose of this brief.

Entries will be accepted not only from individuals but also from formal or informal partnerships. Candidates should be UK based aiming to carry out research over a 2 year period culminating in a milestone output of significance. In all cases candidates should identify a mentor who can contribute objectively to the project and widen the reach of outputs to help make a difference. Please see the following **Terms and Conditions** for full details.

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