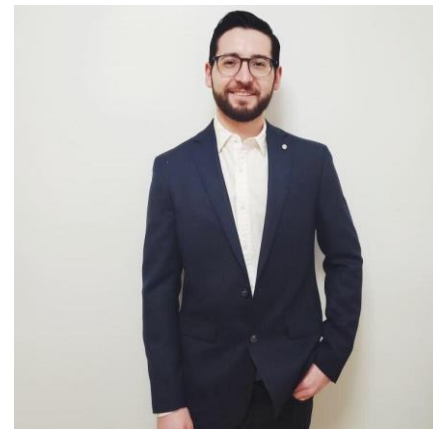


MURCS cohort 2020 biographies

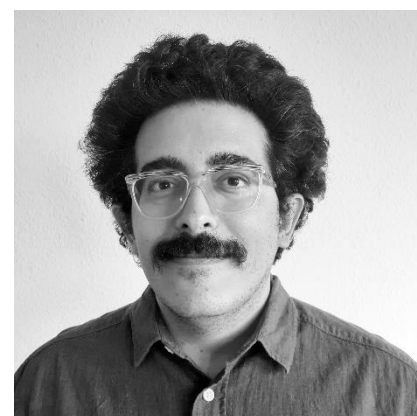
Jonathan Lieber

My name is Jonathan Lieber. I hold a certificate in Urban Forestry and a Diploma in Ecosystem Management. I most recently worked with the City of Toronto as a Program Standards and Development Officer. I am interested in policy initiatives that enable cities to reform themselves in a manner that inspires people and creates ecological abundance. I enjoy exercising, taking on consulting opportunities, and family time. The MURCS Erasmus+ programme will build on my existing skillset, give me international exposure, and award the credentials required to contribute to urban sustainability. I am grateful and excited for the journey ahead.



Mitia Aranda Faieta

I was born in Managua and raised between Nicaragua and Italy, where I completed my studies in Architecture. In the past years I have had the chance to collaborate with different organizations in the humanitarian sector, which has given me the opportunity to live and work in different countries. By joining MURCS, I look forward to learning more about sustainability, climate change, resilience, circular economy, and others interconnected topics. I am interested in exploring how cities can become hubs for positive transformation toward a more sustainable and inclusive way of living. On my free time you can find me biking, exploring, watching a movie, cooking, or brewing coffee.



Evelin Bocanegra Rios

I was born in Trujillo-Peru. I'm an industrial engineer graduated from The National University of Trujillo. I have over four-year experience working in the Center for Prevention and Control of Emergencies and Disasters of La Libertad Regional Health Office, I was responsible of the Scientific Production Area and responsible of providing training to communities and health professionals on issues related to Disasters Risk Management and Climate Change. I believe that a good planning system to lead and manage sustainable development, is a fundamental element to achieve the welfare of individual and collective health of people within the processes of human development that are being affected by climate change.



Luke Evens

Luke Evens is a civil servant based in London. He grew up in Edinburgh and graduated with a BA in Community Development from the University of Glasgow in 2017. Since then, he has worked for the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office in New Delhi and the UK Department for Transport in London. In his free time, Luke enjoys walking, cycling and a good meme.



Josué Arrieta Solís

Sunrises on the Caribbean coast of Costa Rica saw Josué Arrieta Solís birth. Long days at the beach give him ease of mind and soul, just as much as dancing does. He left his hometown and became an Environmental Engineer, to preserve our home planet and pass it on. He obtained his degree at the Technological Institute of Costa Rica. He has worked on environmental impact assessment, GHG accounting and reporting, and waste management. As part of Environmental Committees in San José's Local Government, he has played a key role in revising and proposing environmental regulations for the urban planning of Costa Rican capital.



Saloni Poudel

I have graduated in Civil Engineering in the year 2017. After having worked for 3 years in the post of a Civil Engineer and an Environment Monitoring Person, I started noticing the construction business was an unhinged, unregulated business that was inconsiderate of the Earth's resources. With a strong inclination towards creating a sustainable environment, I have pursued this master's program in Urban Climate and Sustainability. I sincerely believe that this platform will help me grow to become a proficient, competent, and a strategic urban planner. The interdisciplinary nature of the program has a plethora of perspectives to offer including an intercultural environment where learning is an utmost enjoyable and unique experience.



New Sha Modjrian

New Sha Modjrian is an urban designer and planner from Iran. She earned her master's degree in Urban Design from University of Tehran with background education in City Planning at the same university. Her professional profile includes working on several development plans and projects in different scales from a metropolis like Tehran to less populated small-sized cities in her hometown region over the past three years. New Sha believes that pursuing professional Master in Urban Climate and Sustainability (MURCS) would enable her to develop her aptitude and technical skills at a supreme level through learning from real-world projects in sustainable city and climate change adaptation.



Chanodi Wickreme Ratnayake

I am Chanodi Ratnayake, an architect from Sri Lanka. After graduating from University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka with a Bachelor's degree in Architecture, I started working at an architecture firm. While working at the firm, I have engaged myself in commercial grade projects, assisting the projects as a junior architect and as a project architect in private practice. During my undergraduate studies and while working in the construction industry for three years, I developed an interest to advance my knowledge and experience in areas of climate change and sustainability in relation to urban development as there is a necessity to inspire climate conscious urban designs in the local context. I believe MURCS programme is a great opportunity to learn and understand means to tackle the prevailing urban issue in terms of sustainability and climate change.



Arooj Humayun

I'm Arooj from Lahore, Pakistan. I'm an environmental engineer (NUST, Islamabad) with a specialization in Sustainable Energy Systems (QMUL, London). For the past year, I have worked on drafting some parts of EIA and feasibility reports for developmental projects in my country while teaching in a local university. Having lived most of my life in a city like Lahore, I witnessed the direct impact of climate change on urban environments. My hometown has transitioned from a site of cultural heritage to a city with the most polluted air in the world. This transition is what motivates me to study the field of urban climate and sustainability. In joining MURCS my goal is to understand how we can formulate and implement local action plans that will help us mitigate these impacts of climate change in a positive manner.



Maryam Arshad

I am an environmental engineer from Pakistan, having almost three years of experience of working at WWF in the Climate and Energy Programme. My main area of focus is the research and development of projects for waste management, air pollution monitoring and reduction, and ensuring sustainable urban mobility within cities. I am deeply interested in learning and applying holistic strategies that integrate all stakeholders and factors (economic, social and political) to implement practical and technical solutions to transform the urban areas within my country. The multidisciplinary nature of MURCS will also strengthen my knowledge on the planning and design aspects that will help in creating green and climate resilient urban areas.



Abhijith Mathiyathu Sebastian

Hailing from Kerala in Southern India, I completed my bachelor's degree in Architecture from the National Institute of Technology Calicut in 2017. I was the recipient of the Anant Fellowship for Built Environment (2017-18), during which I explored ideas of sustainability through social, philosophical, and technological lenses and experimented with place-making. For the next two years, I worked as an academic associate at Anant National University, Ahmedabad where I engaged with students and contributed to the curriculum, pedagogy, and academic policies. I am keen on exploring spatial theories, heritage, and visual narratives. I see MURCS as an opportunity to gain broader insights and professional skills to tackle the imminent climate emergency.



Sonali Anusree Patro

I am Sonali from India. As an Architect and an Urban Environment Planner, I am passionate about bringing positive change to society and to improve our urban neighborhoods. I am an Architect with Master's in Environmental Planning. I have comprehensive experience in the field of Urban Development, working majorly in the areas of Urban Water and Sanitation, Urban Strategies, Inclusive Infrastructure, Green Infrastructure etc. My 5 years of experience in this industry extensively involves examination of scalable and sustainable solutions for urban problems, development of conceptual and implementable frameworks, development of urban tools for decision making, capacity building and training, stakeholder engagement etc. In this time of rapid economic growth, it is essential to create a balance between urban development and urban environment. Thus, my keen interest for being a part of creating more robust, efficient and smarter cities. The MURCS program offers me the prospect to embrace a rich experience through collaboration and research, giving me the opportunity to upgrade my understanding of sustainable and climate resilient urban systems.



Samson Oluwafemi Ogunfuyi

My background in Meteorology and Climate Science at the Federal University of Technology, Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria: coupled with my professional experience in space technology, has exposed me to the effect of changing climate on the ecosystem. These have resulted in extreme weather events. Understanding the component that gives rise to this changing climate and its complexity has been my drive for applying for the ERASMUS+ Master in Urban Climate and Sustainability (MURCS). These will allow me to tackle these uncertainties by utilizing geospatial techniques for effective planning, management, and applying a scientific approach to combat global climate change. At the end of the program, I intend to expand my knowledge by collaborating with professionals across different fields on the mitigation and adaptation to global climate change.



Sayontani Chateerji

Sayontani is an architect from New Delhi, India, who has worked towards the implementation of sustainable infrastructure solutions in low-income settlements, under the USAID funded initiative for urban development through WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene). Her work with the communities and urban local governance has provided her with a comprehensive understanding of informal neighborhoods and its relation to the city. She was able to capitalize on the strengths and capabilities of over 3500 households to have improved sanitation conditions through the design and implementation of low-cost toilets and pit systems, both at the household and community level, visibly reducing the practice of Open Defecation and Urination. Her experience made her want to explore further, the dynamics of a city, its people, and the processes by which they must engage for sustainable development. The MURCS program allows her to take that evaluation further and acquire the technical know-how needed for the holistic development of cities.



Fernanda Berlitz

Fernanda Berlitz is an architect and urban planner from Brazil. For ten years, she worked as a coordinator with focus on residential solar water heating systems and photovoltaic solar energy. As an architect, she has experience in building and refurbishing residential and commercial projects. With people that had the same vision of social architecture, Fernanda volunteered in Permaculture and Bio-construction projects. In urban planning, she worked together with residents of informal settlements to evaluate their strengths and vulnerabilities when dealing with floods and landslides. The experience improved her awareness on how essential needs are not being fulfilled and how governments and professionals can improve the built environment guaranteeing access to the right of a formal city. With MURCS, Fernanda wants to enhance her knowledge in the area to help urban stakeholders implement different strategies and policies in planning, reduce environment vulnerabilities and actively include the targeted communities in this process.



Sumaila Mohammed

I am Sumaila Mohammed and a Ghanaian by Birth. I hold a Bachelor's Degree in Integrated Development Studies with Planning and Rural Development Option and MSc. in Development Management. I have been working as a Development Planner for over 8 years for the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development. As a development practitioner, the acquisition and application of modern interdisciplinary tools and techniques is key in ensuring sustainability in our built environment. My quest for such tools and techniques led me to the discovery of Masters of Urban Climate and Sustainability (MURCS) Programme. In fact, no other programme can better equip me than MURCS. I am a proud Development Planner and a proud "MURCSian".



Khadija Amir

Khadija is an environmental specialist with core expertise and qualification in environmental sustainability. After completing postgraduate degrees in Environmental Sciences (2010, University of Peshawar) and Sustainable Development (2015, University of Exeter), she worked in the development sector and academia for over 9 years in areas of environmental and social impact assessment processes, environmental laws and policies, environmental safeguards, socioeconomic impact assessment, and stakeholder engagement. Khadija's motivation to study urban climate and sustainability stems from personal and professional experience. MURCS provides an excellent opportunity to critically understand climate change science and policy in the urban context and develop skills to translate policy into local action plans focused on mitigation and adaptation. She is particularly interested in exploring the integration of climate change adaptation and mitigation into environmental and strategic impact assessment processes by influencing project and programme design.



Zarin Tasnim

I am an architect from Bangladesh, and I had the opportunity to work under different architects like Marina Tabassum and profound urban planners in Dhaka. My interest was to learn in a versatile manner and be part of many aspects of the development field. Bangladesh urban context led me to work the last 3 years into an exceptional platform Bengal Institute. I have coordinated a canal restoration project and some urban landscape projects being a research and design associate there. I want to learn and experience the possibility of sustainable practices in a broader field through urban management and to incorporate creative features in innovative ways. From MURCS program I hope to meet professionals of diverse fields and to gain a quality learning experience of public enhanced urban management and climatology.



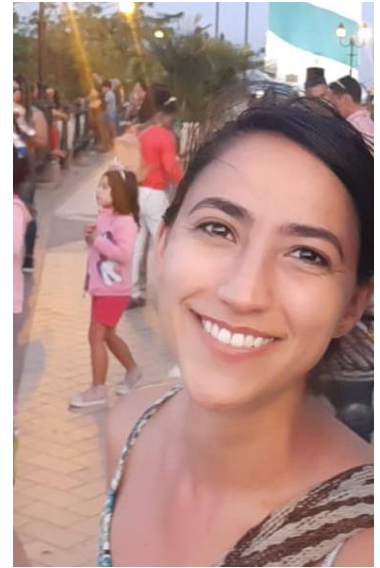
Mushfik Jalal

Mushfik Jalal is an Urban Planner and has experience in working with Risk Sensitive Land Use Plan Projects of Bangladesh. He has completed Bachelor of Urban and Rural Planning and MS in GIS for Environment and Development from Bangladesh. He has expertise to deal with multi-sectoral urban context and strongly believes that solution to alarming impact of Climate Change lies in the Cities. He aspires to learn about Global Sustainability issues and wish to participate in Green and Blue Development.



Lorena Mejía Villegas

Born in Manizales, in the coffee region of Colombia ☺ the youngest of 5 siblings. I love dancing and singing, as well as travelling (love landscapes and mountains). Professional in Cultural and Communicative Management, I worked with theatre production and co-created a band of music for children. After arrived in Bogotá, in 2014 I started working with bike usage promotion and got to know the sustainability. I always wanted to work for defending and preserving the world's heritage, and there's no more important heritage than life and resources. I knew I wanted to dedicate my time, energy, and abilities to create the change. Got to see that things were not under control, and the economy was not a balanced system created for the common well but for some's interests. That's why I created an NGO now called WILL, for connecting high impact solutions with decision makers in government and industry, and make possible the change, transforming mind sets, defeating barriers, towards creating a future with quality of life and access to resources for everyone. I've organized and participated in different events, created a program against food waste, worked with the national police for recycling their uniforms, purposed the concept of marketthink to different companies and I'm part of the international evaluator committee of the green Latin America awards.



Nerxhana Tallushi

I was born and raised in Kavaja, a small costal city in Albania, before arriving to Tirana to studying architecture and urban planning at the Polytechnic University of Tirana. I also followed a specialization in Spatial Planning and GIS application at Polis University to advance my knowledge into urban tools, analysis and decision making. After graduation I worked first as an intern and then as a specialist in the Department of Development and Good Governance, focusing on territorial governmental development programs, including "100 VILLAGES" program. Moreover for two years I worked as a specialist in the Directory of Culture Development Programs, in the Ministry of Culture in Albania dealing mainly with tangible cultural heritage development programs. Every country, city, village and society has its own cultural, historical identity that we planners are challenged not only to identify and preserve it, but also to embrace it and use as a catalyst to develop the future. I believe that this previous job experience allied with MUrCS will consolidate my knowledge in sustainability, resilience and environmental technologies and open a window for new opportunities.

