



China Scholarship Council / Université de Lyon Scholarships for doctoral mobility

Call for Thesis subjects 2026

RESEARCH SUBJECT TITLE: Environmental Narratives in Beijing's Olympic Ceremonies, 2008 and 2022

University / Institution: Université Claude Bernard Lyon 1

Name of the laboratory: Laboratoire sur les Vulnérabilités et l'Innovation dans le Sport (L-ViS)

Website: <https://l-vis.univ-lyon1.fr>

Name of the supervisor: Daniel Malanski

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Doctoral School (name and number): EPIC - ED 485

Lab Language: French and English

Minimum language level required:

- English : C1
(and/or)
- French : C1

Expected duration of the thesis: 36 months

Keywords: Olympic Games, Environmental discourse, Memory, Nation branding, Mega-events.

Abstract

The end of the twentieth century witnessed a growing global awareness of climate change. In 1996, environment was formally established as the third pillar of Olympism, alongside sport and culture. Since then, cities bidding to host the Olympic Games have been expected to 'demonstrate a responsible concern for environmental issues, [and take] measures to reflect such concern in its activities and educate all those connected with the Olympic Movement as to the importance of sustainable development.' This emphasis on environmental communication has gradually influenced the Olympic ceremonies of the twenty-first century, where host nations have incorporated ecological narratives to frame their national pasts, as well as a global present and future, in relation to sustainable development and environmental awareness. This PhD project examines the Beijing 2008 Summer and 2022 Winter Olympics through an analysis of bid documents, ceremony footage, official reports, media guides, and press interviews with ceremony organisers. It seeks to understand the role of environmental discourses in these events and the ways in which traditional narratives of human–nature harmony, balance, and unity have shaped their staging. More broadly, the project investigates how sustainability was presented as a central theme of the Games, how cultural memory and philosophy were incorporated into the framing of hosting policies, and how international expectations interacted with domestic narratives. By situating these questions within wider debates on environmental communication, nation branding, and global governance, the project

aims to examine how mega-events reflect and communicate different approaches to modernity, technology, and ecology to a global audience.

CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Be a citizen or permanent resident of the People's Republic of China;
- Hold (or be about to hold) a master's degree or equivalent demonstrating research aptitude; -
- Be in the 2nd year of a master's programme or the 1st year of a PhD for a single-supervision doctorate;-
- Be in the 2nd year of a PhD for a co-tutelle programme;
- Have a very good command of French or English.

AMOUNT OF THE SCHOLARSHIP-

- The scholarship amounts to €1,350 per month, for a maximum duration of 48 months.

DEADLINE AND APPLICATION PROCESS

Candidates should submit their full application -- comprising a CV, a letter of motivation, and official proof of language proficiency -- by email to Dr Daniel Malanski (daniel.de-souza-malanski@univ-lyon1.fr).

Applications must be received no later than 30 January 2026.