

Press release

Australian awarded Gottfried Böhm Scholarship 2025/2026 – Leona Dusanovic clearly impresses jury

Cologne, 2 September 2025. The recipient of the international Gottfried Böhm Scholarship for the year 2025/2026 has been announced: 33-year-old Australian Leona Dusanovic prevailed in a multi-stage selection process against 104 applicants from 45 countries and six continents.

Her project proposal, 'Cologne #3' won over the jury across the board. In it, Dusanovic focuses on the future of Cologne's Chorweiler district:

Based on a detailed analysis of urban planning and social conditions, Dusanovic aims to examine how identity and community can be redefined in a district on the outskirts of the metropolis. The focus is on the scholarship theme 'Strengthening Neighbourhoods': public places and spaces should not only be practical, but above all create places where people can come together and exchange ideas – in line with Gottfried Böhm's idea of human and communal architecture.

The jury was particularly impressed by her structured approach and her convincing project in terms of content and concept, which has been thought through down to the last detail.

With her approach, which combines tradition and modernity, the Australian architect exemplifies how architecture and urban planning can provide new impetus for social interaction. Prof. Paul Böhm, chairman of the jury, explains: 'It is impressive to see how young architects are taking up my father's ideas and at the same time developing them further for the future. In Leona Dusanovic, we have found a scholarship holder who dares to build this bridge between tradition and innovation.'

Susanne Fabry, chairwoman of the Association of Friends and Sponsors of TH Köln e.V., is very pleased with the second round of the Gottfried Böhm Scholarship. 'The number and quality of international applications in this second round were impressive. We are therefore all the more delighted that Leona Dusanovic's project was successful. With her, the Gottfried Böhm Scholarship has gained a scholarship holder who takes up Böhm's ideas and at the same time provides new impetus for urban development in Cologne.'

With the residency scholarship, Leona Dusanovic will live and work in Cologne for one year starting in early October and develop her urban development project for Cologne and the surrounding region. In autumn 2026, she will then present the results of her work to the public for the first time in the atrium of the Spanish Building.

‘It is a great honour and privilege to have received the support and recognition of the jury for the Gottfried Böhm Scholarship 2025/26 and to be part of this rich heritage. I look forward to immersing myself in the city and being open to the opportunities that may arise in the course of the year for architecture and urban planning,’ said Dusanovic.

The postgraduate scholarship was established by Cologne's mayor Henriette Reker on the occasion of Gottfried Böhm's 100th birthday and is being awarded for the second time this year.

The scholarship idea: A new cityscape for Chorweiler: ‘Cologne #3’

With her project ‘Cologne #3’, Leona Dusanovic is pursuing a visionary idea for the Cologne district of Chorweiler. She is building on the legacy of Gottfried Böhm, who set standards in social housing construction in the 1970s with his Seeberg-Nord housing estate in Cologne-Chorweiler. At the same time, she draws inspiration from historical city plans such as the ‘New Cologne’ from the 1950s.

Her goal: to rethink Chorweiler in its special dual role as a suburban area and, at the same time, as a once-planned second city centre – and to use this as a springboard for developing ideas for a vibrant, fairer and future-oriented urban design.

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A particular focus is on the question of how Chorweiler can become more densely populated and at the same time more vibrant without compromising quality of life. On the contrary: new forms of living, modern open spaces and the clever use of existing areas

should contribute to improving quality of life. Natural elements such as Lake Fühlinger and previously unused areas are being deliberately incorporated into the plans.

With 'Cologne #3', Dusanovic wants to show that Chorweiler is more than just a suburb on the outskirts. Her goal is to design a model for vibrant, equitable and sustainable urban development – an example of how a strong, identity-building community can also emerge in peripheral areas.

The scholarship holder

Leona Dusanovic, born in Ulm in 1992 and raised in Australia, graduated with honours in 2017 with a Master of Architecture from the renowned RMIT University in Melbourne. Study visits took her to ETSAB in Barcelona, among other places, where she worked with the internationally renowned architecture firm Flores & Prats.

She has received numerous awards for her architectural work, including the Australian Institute of Architects' Melbourne Prize 2017 and the Fender Katsalidis Travelling Prize. In addition to her practical work, Dusanovic regularly publishes essays on architectural and urban topics and has presented her work at international exhibitions such as Melbourne Design Week.

Professionally, she has been working for many years as a senior associate at NH Architecture in Melbourne, where she manages projects in the fields of culture, social housing and healthcare. In addition to architectural design work, her responsibilities include close collaboration with clients, stakeholders and specialist planners, material and detail development, and the structural implementation of complex large-scale projects. At the same time, she taught as a Design Studio Leader at RMIT University from 2018 to 2024, passing on her knowledge to the next generation of architects.

With her broad international experience, her practical teaching approach and her keen sense of place-specific identity, Leona Dusanovic combines theory and practice in a unique way. These are qualities that she now brings to the Gottfried Böhm Scholarship.

Images are available for download here: [Gottfried Böhm Scholarship](#)



This year's scholarship winner:
Leona Dusanovic from Australia.



The Jury of the Gottfried Böhm Scholarship: f.l.t.r. Paul Böhm, Bernadette Heiermann, Eva Herr, Stefan Herzig, Jürgen Minkus, Susanne Fabry, Carola Wiese, Kaspar Kraemer und Julien Kinnart. Not pictured: Christl Drey, Klaus Küppers

About the scholarship

The scholarship holder receives free accommodation for one year, a workplace in a creative environment in the heart of the city and a monthly grant of 2,500 euros. The scholarship is awarded and supervised by the Association of Friends and Sponsors of the Technische Hochschule Köln e.V. The results of the work produced as part of the Gottfried Böhm Scholarship will be presented at the end of the scholarship at a reception

hosted by the Mayor of Cologne and then exhibited for two weeks in the Spanischer Bau. With the scholarship, the City of Cologne and the sponsors of the scholarship want to honor the Pritzker Prize winner, who died in 2021. The scholarship is scheduled to start at the beginning of October 2025.

About the jury

The following jurors will decide in mid-September who will be the scholarship holder of the second round of the Gottfried Böhm Scholarship

- Prof. Paul Böhm, architect, Faculty of Architecture at Cologne University of Applied Sciences
- Christl Drey, architect and urban planner, Chairwoman of the House of Architecture Cologne
- Susanne Fabry, Chairwoman of the Association of Friends and Sponsors of the Cologne University of Applied Sciences e.V.
- Bernadette Heiermann, architect BDA, research assistant at RWTH Aachen University
- Eva Herr, Head of the Cologne Urban Planning Office
- Prof. Dr. Stefan Herzig, professor emeritus and former president of the Cologne University of Applied Sciences
- Kaspar Kraemer, architect BDA, member of the Association of Friends and Sponsors of Cologne University of Applied Sciences e.V.
- Klaus Küppers, Branch Manager NRW of PANDION Real Estate GmbH
- Jürgen Minkus, Architect BDA, Chairman of the Cologne Design Advisory Board
- Julian Kinnart, Office of the Mayor of Cologne, Planning and Building Officer
- Prof. Carola Wiese, Architect BDA, Faculty of Architecture at Cologne University of Applied Sciences

The following sponsors support the scholarship:

- Architekturbüro Paul Böhm
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- PANDION AG

- City of Cologne
- Wolf Immobilien Gruppe

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