



PhD Opportunity in Landscape Architecture at Texas Tech University (Fall 2026 Start)



Rui Zhu, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

Department of Landscape Architecture

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About the Department

Texas Tech University is recognized as a *Carnegie R1: Very High Research Activity* institution. The Department of Landscape Architecture, housed within the Davis College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources, fosters a collaborative and research-driven environment that addresses critical issues of the Southern High Plains and beyond. Students benefit from cross-disciplinary partnerships and gain access to diverse landscapes that serve as living laboratories for applied research, design, and planning.

About the Advisor

Dr. Rui Zhu is an Assistant Professor whose research focuses on urban regeneration, green infrastructure, landscape performance, spatial analysis, and big data, with particular attention to climate adaptation and flood resilience. She earned a master's degree in Landscape Architecture and a Ph.D. in Urban and Regional Science from Texas A&M University, and spent two years as a postdoctoral researcher in Texas A&M's College of Architecture before joining Texas Tech. Her work has been nationally and internationally recognized, including the ASLA National Honor Award in Research (2020), the EDRA CORE Award (2020), and the Top 10 Exceptional Paper Award from *Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry* (2023). Dr. Zhu has published 18 peer-reviewed journal articles, co-edited *Contemporary Landscape Performance Methods and Techniques* (2024), and is the lead editor of *Vacant Land Regeneration: Novel Strategies for Maximizing Local Impact* (Routledge, 2025).

About the CRUX Lab

CRUX (Cities Resilience, Urban Regeneration, and eXploration) Lab examines how shrinking, flood-prone, and post-industrial cities can build resilience through adaptive design and data-driven planning. The lab focuses on transforming vacant and underutilized land into multifunctional systems that enhance ecology, health, and community well-being. By integrating spatial data science, landscape performance assessment, and AI-based geospatial analytics, CRUX connects design, policy, and environmental data to address urban challenges. The lab currently has two Research Assistants working on AI-driven vacancy detection and landscape performance assessment, with opportunities for collaboration, mentorship, and publication.

Position Description

Dr. Zhu is recruiting a highly motivated PhD student to join her research group. The successful candidate will have strong interests in urban regeneration, green infrastructure, flood resilience, and big data applications in urban research. Students in this position will develop expertise in spatial analysis, GIS, Python-based methods, and big data analytics, with opportunities to publish in high-impact journals and participate in cross-disciplinary collaborations.



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Funding & Support

- This PhD position offers a **2-year full fellowship**.
- Continued support will be available through college/department funding or Dr. Zhu's research grants after the fellowship period.

Preferred Qualifications

- Background in landscape architecture, urban planning, geography, or a related discipline
- Experience with GIS, Python, and/or big data analysis (or a strong interest in learning)
- Enthusiasm for applying spatial and computational methods to urban and environmental research

How to Apply

Send an email to ruizhu@ttu.edu with the subject line: "*Prospective PhD.*" Please include:

1. CV
2. Short statement of research interests (1–2 pages)
3. Writing sample (e.g., thesis chapter, article, or report)
4. Portfolio
5. Contact information for two references (names, titles, emails)

Application deadline: January 10, 2026

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, with priority given to those submitted by the deadline.