The Topic

Church buildings are important testimonies of cultural heritage that shape the image of cities and villages. As a result of current social changes, many church buildings in Europe can no longer be operated and maintained by church institutions. They are sold, rented, converted. The topic is complex and has so far been discussed mainly at local and regional level. For the first time, the Herrenhausen Symposium brings together experts from Germany, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland and England with the aim of exchanging experiences, expanding the field of vision and developing new perspectives in European comparison. The country-specific differences in legal and financial terms have led to different practices of church conversions. Examples, methods and solutions from different countries will be compared and discussed from different perspectives. In particular, these are the perspectives of cultural studies and theology, architecture and urban development, protection of monuments, users, the real estate business, the public and the rural areas.

Travel Grants Available

The Volkswagen Foundation offers 20 travel grants for PhD students, early postdocs and young professionals as well as society stakeholders or volunteers that are active in this field. If you are interested in addressing research and practical experiences or challenges of reusing churches – please apply. The submitted abstract can be in English or German. Successful applicants will get the chance to shortly present their main arguments in a lightning talk and by actively participating in the discussions. Posters on respective projects will be displayed during the symposium. The grants include travel expenses to and from Hanover, as well as accommodation.

Deadline: October 28, 2019

Apply here: [https://call.volkswagenstiftung.de/submission?id=20](https://call.volkswagenstiftung.de/submission?id=20)

Your Application Should Contain the Following

- A short description of your research focus that explains how you intend to tackle the challenges of reusing churches.
- An abstract of your current research project incl. main research question, methods, results and outlook, as well as naming your research institution, research partners and PhD thesis advisors. Or if you apply as a young professional: A description of the project, institution or initiative you are engaging in explaining subjects, agenda, goals, activities, time table and organigram, as well as naming your direct supervisor (max. 3,000 char.)
- A short C.V. including contact details, publications or involvement in relevant projects (max. 1,000 char.)

Selection

Participants will be selected by the steering committee. Acceptance will be based on qualification of the applicant as well as relevance, originality and potential to meet the goals of the symposium. We will inform the applicants about the results in December 2019.