

LUISA — BRAVO

Born in Italy / Italian Citizenship

Free-lance Architectural Engineer, VAT number: IT01746850443

Office address: via Paolo G. Martini 26/d, 40134 Bologna, ITALY

E info@luisabravo.world | M +39 347 9684 273

EU Expert

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WoS Researcher ID

K-9685-2019

Orcid

orcid.org/0000-0003-4911-8002

RESUME

Architectural engineer (University of Bologna, 2001), cultural entrepreneur, public space researcher and passionate activist, Dr Luisa Bravo holds a PhD in Building and Territorial Engineering from University of Bologna (2008), with a thesis in Urban Design titled “Public versus private: the fickle search for a plan for the urban well-being”.

Adjunct Professor in Urban Design at the University of Florence (since 2013), Dr Bravo has developed post-doctoral research and teaching in leading universities, including University of California Berkeley, IURD – Institute of Urban and Regional Development (USA), Queensland University of Technology, Faculty of Creative Industries, School of Design (Australia), KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Centre for the Future of Places (Sweden), Lebanese American University, School of Architecture and Design (Lebanon); she has been the recipient of prestigious grants and awards, including the Marco Polo scholarship awarded by the University of Bologna and the Australia Endeavour Executive Award, fully funded by the Australian Government, Department of Education and Training. She has published extensively in Italian, English, Spanish, Portuguese and Chinese and has supervised and mentored Master’s and PhD students from various universities on an international level. She has been appointed as an external examiner for PhD theses at the following institutions: Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (Spain), Universitat Ramon Llull (Spain), Cardiff University (United Kingdom), Université de Paris (France), Queensland University of Technology (Australia), University of New South Wales (Australia). She is also an expert evaluator for the European Commission for Horizon Europe, for the European COST project and for the Fulbright Commission (USA), an external evaluator for EIT Culture & Creativity, and she is a peer reviewer for several international scientific journals and for Routledge (Built Environment research). In 2022, she was appointed as an external expert to the European Commission for the research project 'Public Spaces as Spaces for Citizen Engagement', promoted by the JRC Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy.

She has served as keynote speaker in international conferences in more than 30 countries and she has actively participated in key UN summits, including [Habitat III](#), the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Development in Quito (2016), several UN-Habitat’s World Urban Fora (Kuala Lumpur, 2018; Abu Dhabi, 2020; Katowice, 2022; Cairo, 2024), where she curated exhibitions and organized networking and training events; she was invited and accredited to attend the 26th Governing Council (Nairobi, 2017), the first UN-Habitat Assembly (Nairobi, 2019) and two High Level Meetings on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda at the UN headquarters in New York (2017, 2022). Her lecture ‘[Stand up for Public Space!](#)’ has been included in the UN-Habitat Global Urban Lectures series (2017), an initiative gathering expertise from renowned international scholars and professionals who excel in their fields.

In 2005 Dr Bravo founded the engineering and architectural firm [BRAVO DESIGN](#) in Bologna, where she currently works as a freelance.

In 2013 she founded [City Space Architecture](#), a non-profit cultural organization based in Bologna whose mission is to promote public space culture on a global scale, through projects of international cooperation. Under her leadership, City Space Architecture became a partner of UN-Habitat, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, and was included in the [United Nations General Assembly of Partners \(GAP\)](#), [Research and Academia Partner Constituent Group](#); became a member of the [Davos](#)

[Baukultur](#) Alliance of the World Economic Forum and of GPN – Global Planners Network, an alliance of professional planning institutes focused on sustainable development. City Space Architecture is recognized as a research organization by the Research Organization Registry (ROR) with ID [00n1dbb71](#).

As President of City Space Architecture, Dr Bravo initiated and is currently leading several public space projects, such as: [The Journal of Public Space](#), the first, interdisciplinary, academic, diamond open access journal entirely dedicated to public space, developed in partnership with UN-Habitat; [Public Space Academy](#), the first, free, interdisciplinary educational program on public space, developed in partnership with Ove Arup Foundation; [Museo Spazio Pubblico](#) [Public Space Museum] a transdisciplinary practice hosted in a renovated neighborhood supermarket in the suburb of Bologna; the web-magazine [Mastering Public Space](#), an online and free resource with a curated collection of news on public space from influential sources. With UN-Habitat she has also developed [Mapping Resilient Communities](#), a mapping research initiative on practices of social resilience related to public space, in regard to the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Dr Bravo is the initiator and curator of the Film Festival [URBAN VISIONS. Beyond the Ideal City](#) which takes place in Bologna and of its twin in the United Arab Emirates [URBAN VISIONS. Architecture and the Future of Cities](#).

In 2019 she founded [Genius Saeculi](#), a for-profit company operating in the field of Digital Humanities, headquartered in Bologna.

Dr Bravo is a member of ISOCARP (International Society of City and Regional Planners), a member of AESOP (Association of European Schools of Planning) Thematic group Public Spaces and Urban Cultures, Board Member of Ecocity Builders (USA), Member of the Board of Experts for the European Prize for Urban Public Space promoted by the Centre for Contemporary Culture of Barcelona (CCCCB), and Member of the Scientific Committee of the Biennial of Public Space in Rome.

She is also a consultant to the UN-Habitat Global Public Space Programme, she has participated in several Expert Group Meetings and has collaborated on UN thematic reports on public space. She was Project Leader of 'A-Place. Linking places through networked artistic practices', co-funded by the Creative Europe program of the European Union (2019-2023), a consultant for the Global Platform for the Right to the City for which she wrote the thematic paper [Cities and Human Settlements with Quality Public Spaces](#) (2022), the academic coordinator of the research project Safe and Sound Cities developed in Ecuador, Colombia and Indonesia, funded by Swiss Philanthropy Foundation (2023-25).

She is an Advisor to the Public Spaces Work Programme of the International Union of Architects (UIA) for the development of initiatives at the World Congress to take place in Barcelona (2026). Her works have been exhibited at the Seoul Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism (South Korea, 2019), at the International Architecture Exhibition, Venice Biennale (Italy, 2021), and at the Biennale dello Stretto (Italy, 2024), where she curated the section on "Public Space / Relations".

In 2024, the Emilia-Romagna Regional Government appointed her as a consultant to develop methodologies for public-private negotiations in urban transformation projects, to maximise public interest and enhance compliance with Regional Law 24/2017.

Through her interdisciplinary work that connects academia, policy, and practice, Dr. Bravo has become a prominent voice championing public space culture and civic participation via research, education, and global cooperation.

