

Transnational Futures School:

Exploring (Un)Just Green Transformations in Post-Socialist Contexts (PostGreen)

Overview

The Transnational Futures School: Exploring (Un)Just Green Transformations in Post-Socialist Contexts (PostGreen) is an international research and transfer-oriented teaching initiative bringing together students from Ilia State University and the University of Leipzig. The program combines online seminars, field-based summer school activities in Georgia, and a public dissemination phase in Germany. It integrates academic research, collaborative learning, and innovative knowledge-transfer formats such as exhibitions or other public-facing outputs.

The school will run from April 2026 to October 2026 and is funded by the Leibniz Association within the Leibniz Lab “Umbrüche und Transformationen” (Upheavals and Transformations).

The Transnational Futures School is implemented in cooperation with researchers from:

- ❖ Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography
- ❖ Leibniz Institute for Agricultural Development in Transition Economies
- ❖ Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient
- ❖ Leibniz Institute of East and Southeast European Studies
- ❖ Ilia State University

The initiative promotes sustainable transnational academic cooperation and strengthens long-term collaboration between Georgian and German institutions.

Objective

The Transnational Futures School aims to critically explore socio-ecological and “green” transformation processes in post-socialist contexts by examining environmental justice, power relations, and knowledge hierarchies, while fostering intercultural learning and sustainable academic partnerships. The program develops collaborative and participatory research skills and integrates academic inquiry with public knowledge-transfer formats, enabling participants to act as co-producers of knowledge and to design and implement joint research and transfer projects within transnational teams.

Who Should Join?

The program is open to **Bachelor’s (study year 3 and 4), Master’s and PhD students of Ilia State University** who have a strong interest in socio-ecological transformations, environmental governance, sustainability, and social justice. It seeks highly motivated individuals willing to actively engage in international and interdisciplinary teamwork and to **commit fully to all phases of the project**. Participation

is limited to **seven students** from Ilia State University, and full attendance throughout the entire program is mandatory.

Thematic Focus

The program addresses key dimensions of green transformation processes in post-socialist contexts, with particular attention to environmental justice and inequality, energy and infrastructure transitions, resource governance and land-use change, and agricultural and rural transformation. It further explores socio-agro-biodiversity and sustainability risks, the role of social movements and environmental activism as well as questions of transnational knowledge production and transfer. Conceptually, the program draws on perspectives from political ecology, post-socialist studies, and critical geography to provide a nuanced and interdisciplinary understanding of socio-ecological change.

Program Structure

❖ Preparatory Seminar Phase (April – June 2026)

This phase consists of 6 block seminar sessions (double sessions). Seminars will take place on **Tuesdays (dates: 07/04; 21/04; 28/04; 05/05; 19/05; 09/06), from 14:15 to 17.45 (UTC/GMT +4/Georgian time) in a hybrid mode at Ilia State University**. It provides participants with theoretical foundations as well as methodological and knowledge-transfer-related skills relevant to the study of socio-ecological transformations. Working in transnational groups composed of students from Ilia State University and the University of Leipzig, participants will develop initial research questions, design collaborative research in Tbilisi and the Racha region, and transfer concepts.

❖ Summer School in Georgia (19 – 28 July 2026)

This intensive in-person phase combines thematic workshops, excursions, and field research activities linked to the students' collaborative projects. It includes empirical data collection and engagement with local stakeholders in Tbilisi and the mountainous region of Racha. The summer school fosters community-based learning, interdisciplinary exchange, and further development of the research and transfer projects.

❖ Transfer Phase in Leipzig (1 – 5 October 2026, dates TBC)

During this phase, Georgian participants will travel to Leipzig to finalize and present their project results together with their German peers in a public event, most likely in the form of an exhibition. Alternative formats, such as podcasts or other creative knowledge-transfer outputs, may be developed depending on student interest. The program also includes visits to partner institutes in Leipzig and Halle, as well as reflection sessions on the collaborative research process and outcomes.

Key Details

Duration: The school will run from **April 2026 through October 2026**.

Format: Seminars in hybrid mode | in-person summer school | public dissemination phase in Germany

Team size: 7 students (GEO) + 7 students (GER)

Language of instruction: English

Certification: Participants who complete the series successfully will receive a certificate of participation.

How to Register

Interested students are invited to **register through the online form**: <https://forms.gle/NChkUY7YfHZF5doy6> Registration will be **open until 15 March 2026**. Interviews with shortlisted candidates will be held on 19–20 March 2026 and final decision letters will be communicated to selected participants on 25 March 2026. Please note, a detailed schedule and logistical information will be shared with participants after the registration and selection process.



Selected participants must confirm full **availability for all phases of the Transnational Futures School**.

Financial Conditions (Georgian Participants)

The following costs are covered:

- ❖ International travel to Germany (will be reimbursed by the project)
- ❖ Accommodation in Germany
- ❖ Domestic travel within Georgia and Germany
- ❖ Accommodation during the Georgia summer school in Racha (shared rooms)
- ❖ Most meals during project activities (participants may need to cover some individual meals in Tbilisi during excursions).

Coordination

Project coordinator and team lead: Markus Sattler (Germany)

Local coordinator: Mary Kate (Ketevan) Ugrekhelidze (Ilia State University, Georgia)

For additional information, please contact us at ketevan.ugrekhelidze.1@iliauni.edu.ge (Mary Kate Ugrekhelidze, Ilia State University).

Join Us! We look forward to welcoming you to this valuable learning experience!