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Her fields of expertise comprise urban and regional planning and sustainable management of natural resources, with a focus on good governance and livelihood approaches. In her research Dr. Sandholz focusses on, sustainable urban and regional development, in particular on urban regeneration, nature-based solutions for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, good governance and livelihood approaches, based on empirical social research methods.

Dr. Sandholz has previously worked as assistant professor at the University of Innsbruck, where she was part of the working groups 'Development Studies and Sustainability Science' and 'Natural Hazards Research'. At TH Köln University of Applied Sciences she has managed an international research project on the potentials of urban green spaces in Brazil and worked as scientific coordinator of the Center for Natural Resources and Development, a global university network under the "Higher Education Excellence in Development Cooperation" Programme of German Academic Exchange Service and German Federal Ministry for Development and Cooperation (BMZ). Amongst others, she was involved in different activities related to urban areas, namely urban risk and risk reduction as well as resource efficient cities.