

Open invitation for PhD dissertation proposals

Architecture and the City Research Group, Department of Architecture, TU DELFT

New Urban Configurations for the 21st Century

Introduction

Under the auspices of the Graduate School of the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, Delft University of Technology, the research group *Architecture and the City* (A&C) of the department of Architecture invites interested academics and/or professional candidates to submit a PhD proposal aligned with the main purpose of the program.

The A&C research group is part of the Department of Architecture's research program and as such connects to various research and education activities within and beyond the department. The group offers a challenging research environment that includes facilities within the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment and the A+BE Graduate School.

The members of the group have different international backgrounds, combining skilled researchers and renowned practitioners. Current members are, amongst others, Prof. ir. Kees Kaan, Prof. ir. Nathalie de Vries, dr. Olindo Caso, dr. Roberto Cavallo, ir. Sien van Dam, ir. Otto Diesfeldt, dr. Esther Gramsbergen, dr. Nicola Marzot, ir. Iskandar Pané, dr. Manuela Triggianese.

The A&C group is a challenging academic environment where candidates can develop their independent PhD research counting on the support and enthusiasm of experienced staff members, able to relate to affined research and educational activities on a faculty and university level, national and international.

Architecture and the City program

The city is a collective artefact shaped by public processes. The A&C research group considers the notion of public realm as a lens to look at the (trans)formation of built forms. In doing this, A&C explicitly includes the changing socio-cultural dynamics of public institutions along with the development and transformation of physical public infrastructures over time.

A&C's main goal is to clarify and contribute to ongoing debates concerning the role of the architectural project within complex urban transformations, towards (the definition of) *New Urban Configurations for the 21st Century*. The research aims at understanding the potential role of architectural projects for dealing with future forms of *publicness*, starting from case studies in the Dutch as well as the European context.

A&C actively engages in cross-over research projects with other disciplines, inside and outside of the built environment, adopting multiple research methods. Building upon the tradition of typomorphological studies, A&C research includes research-by-design initiatives conducted with (PhD)students, professional firms, public and private institutions, municipalities and within (inter)national collaborations.

Research focus: New Urban Configurations for the 21st Century

Cities and metropolitan regions are becoming increasingly complex systems, where various challenges like increasing population, mobility and accessibility, food, energy and waste cycles, social inclusion, have direct influence on the well-being of the inhabitants. In addition, uncertainties and unpredictable events will more and more raise the degree of difficulty in facing those challenges.

In the meantime, urban environments have to cope with a number of pressing issues. First and foremost, the need for suitable space. Which new urban configurations are generated by the growing urbanization? How do diversity of contexts and traditions influence innovation in urban regions? Where do we build the homes that are needed to house everyone? How do we ensure a good business climate or a good education? How do we deal with the displacement of people? How do building typologies evolve in the light of the raising socio-spatial challenges? And how do we make sure that all these transformation tasks are carried out in a sound manner preventing undesired effects on existing urban fabrics and valuable landscapes? In addition, agreements upon UN sustainability goals have been made at international level and cities as well as metropolitan areas are engaged in programs striving for healthy as well as vibrant living environments, through which solid solutions for amongst other, densification, transformation, accessibility and attractiveness of public spaces have to be brought forward.

These are major themes, where challenges of environmentally sustainable, economically vital and socially inclusive urban environments will have to be met in the future by interlinking a.o. new, existing and re-used buildings as well as urban spaces, infrastructure, water and green systems. Yet, themes where the national, regional and local authorities cannot switch without having private parties and citizens on board. In this framework the main focus is on the role of architecture in the transitions towards *New Urban Configurations for the 21st Century* as pivotal knowledge to increase the research and design capacities of future generations of academics and professionals.

Call for PhD projects

This call for PhD projects is open for proposals in four interconnected research areas (future challenges) under the umbrella theme *New Urban Configurations for the 21st Century*:

- 1 Architecture empowering the dialogue among stakeholders. The development of complex projects or large scale urban interventions, involves a wide range of specific interests the design(er) has to translate into commonly shared projects.
2. Future types and models for new urban configurations in which public meets private. Hybridity, multiplicity, sharing, customization, leading to the architecture of publicness in the 21st century built environment.
- 3 The architectural project and its role in contemporary infrastructure networks (mobility, culture, knowledge, data). Ways through which architecture can act as a driver for transformation in the spatial, social and policy agenda of urban areas.
4. The cities and territory of the Randstad conurbation and comparable contexts. Elaborating at different scale levels on knowledge and geographical data such as water management, heritage, institutional representation, connectivity, for setting the agenda of future design strategies.

PhD position

The PhD candidate will conduct academic research and related activities. The candidate will be integrated into the A&C research group, working closely with members and international partners. The program will provide a platform for the development of research skills and experience.

For a successful application the candidate must be able to:

- 1-situate his/her proposal within the A&C research themes elaborating on the ambition of the intended research.

2-clearly set up hypothesis, theoretical framework, methods and approach of the research that the dissertation will address.

3-demonstrate the proposed dissertation's value and contribution to existing discourse

The PhD trajectory will commence with a one-year probationary period, at the end of which the candidate will submit to the peer-review process. The review panel of both external and internal jurors will evaluate the research work for its quality and scientific rigor. In case the research work will prove to be satisfactory, the hospitality will be extended for an additional period of three years expecting completion of this PhD thesis during four years in total. The A&C research group will appoint the promoter (full or associate professors) as well as a staff member from the A&C group holding a PhD degree as co-promoter/daily supervisor.

Please note that TU Delft does **not** provide financial support and that the candidate has to demonstrate the availability of funding to financially support her/himself during the PhD research and the ability to pay the mandatory tuition fee.

TU Delft's Doctorate Regulations and the Graduate School rules, can be found on:

<https://www.tudelft.nl/bk/onderzoek/graduate-school-a-be/>

Additional Graduate School requirements are described online:

<https://www.tudelft.nl/en/education/programmes/phd/fees-and-funding/>

Submission Requirements

Motivation letter, one A4. The applicant should elaborate on personal motivations, interests, and aspirations in pursuing a PhD degree and describe his/her qualifications. The applicant should explicitly argue how the proposal is closely aligned with the A&C research interests. Specify the area(s) of focus and indicate how the applicant's research proposal pertains to those areas.

Full C.V. The C.V. should contain comprehensive chronological information of your academic and professional experience, as well as a record of publication. The C.V. should also include the names and contact information of three referents or recommenders. Also mention in which capacity these are familiar with your qualifications and capabilities (e.g. teacher, employer, colleague, et cetera). Please do not enclose any letters of reference or recommendation in the proposal package. If needed, we will contact your referents/recommenders directly.

Research Outline

The outline should include the following:

1. Provisional Title: A general introduction to the project, framing it conceptually, thematically, indicating research methods and strategies and the time table for a year research period.
2. Abstract: Short summary (300-500 words), including keywords.
3. Question(s)/Hypothesis, Aims and Goals: Clearly formulate the question(s) or hypothesis that drive the research and carefully articulate the aims and ambitions of the proposed study.
4. Preliminary outline: Describe the overall structure of the PhD research and explain in which ways it will address your question(s)/hypothesis.
5. Disciplinary Approach: Introduce your research methodology and position it in its larger (or cross/ or inter/ or trans-disciplinary)framework.

6. **Research significance:** Explain why this research is relevant and original. (Comment may be included as to who you believe is your 'audience'.) Position the proposed research within the framework of the research programs as spelled out by the A&C group.

7. **Preliminary Annotated Bibliography:** Distinguish primary and secondary literature and provide short summaries of each source regarding topic, disciplinary/methodological/theoretical framework used and the relevance to the research.

8. **Addendum:** This can include anything the candidate finds relevant advancing a clear picture of him/herself as a potential PhD candidate – for example a published text.

Document Length: This first draft research should be limited to +/- 2500 words (excluding bibliography & addendum).

Submission specifications

All the above-mentioned information must be consolidated in one single PDF file of no more than 30 pages and 20 MB. Please name the PDF file as: *Lastname_keyword.pdf* (e.g. Paul Smith_Water Sight_date.pdf).

Submission: The deadline for submission is 15 September 2020, 12PM (CET).

Questions and proposal submission:

Dr. Olindo Caso, coordinator of the research group A&C (O.Caso@tudelft.nl)

Selection Process

The senior members of the A&C research groups and a representative of the departmental research council will first screen the proposals for qualification. After the initial screening, the reviewers will assemble a short list of the selected candidates and invite them for a presentation. Based on the results, the A&C research group and a representative of the departmental research council will decide whether they will accept the selected PhD candidate or not. In certain cases, the faculty may ask the candidate to answer additional questions and revise the proposal for a follow-up meeting before a decision is made.

Schedule

Invitation: 15 July 2020

Submission: 15 September 2020

Interview and Presentation: 15 October 2020

Notification of Acceptance: 15 November 2020

Start research work: January/February 2021

One-Year Peer-Review: January/February 2022

Completion: January/February 2025

WEB LINKS:

-[A&C webpage](https://www.tudelft.nl/bk/onderzoek/onderzoek-bij-bouwkunde/architecture/research-group-architecture-and-the-city/) (https://www.tudelft.nl/bk/onderzoek/onderzoek-bij-bouwkunde/architecture/research-group-architecture-and-the-city/)

For further information about the [Graduate School A+BE](http://phd.bk.tudelft.nl/): http://phd.bk.tudelft.nl/