

Call for PhD proposals

Architecture and Democracy: Institutions

The Jaap Bakema Study Centre, together with the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, Delft University of Technology and Het Nieuwe Instituut in Rotterdam invite PhD proposals to expand the Architecture and Democracy programme.

This open call is the second edition of the Architecture and Democracy programme, and is geared towards the question of institutions in democracies, their histories and their future, in relation to the specific role of architecture and urban planning. In light of the current political and ideological crises in liberal democracies and former welfare states around the world, we are interested to learn how institutions might sustain democracies, allow for continuities and transformation, and nurture resilience.

Key Questions Defining the Call

How did institutions envisage, instrumentalise, regulate and impact architecture, planning and the built environment? How did institutions define and develop democratic governance models for open societies of the twentieth century and of today, especially the project of the welfare state? How did the institutions of open societies prepare for the current societies of control? How have survey, bureaucracies, data production, management and planning been aligned with new spatial strategies, configurations and models? How might institutions undo control systems, and allow for freedoms? Whose control? And whose freedom? To what extent did institutions stimulate and absorb architectural experiment, in pursuit of disciplinary disruption, expansion or transformation? How did the projects of the avant-gardes, mainstream culture and populism intersect here with the emergence of new cultural and professional practices?

In terms of welfare state histories and futures we are interested in proposals that address institutions of redistribution, support and care, emancipation and environmental concern: from the politics of modern family planning to affordable housing and elderly care, financialisation models and urban protest. We encourage the combination of archival and literature studies with ethnographical and design analytical methodologies to merge theory with field work and field impact. We seek approaches to allow for a multitude of perspectives and voices, intersectional and pluralistic. All in order to develop a view on what sort of future institutions are needed to sustain democratic societies.

Position and Funding

The call is launched under the auspices of the Graduate School of the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, Delft University of Technology. Accepted candidates will be accommodated in the Department of Architecture and its research group Architecture, Culture and Modernity.

Neither the Graduate School nor the research group offer scholarships or paid PhD positions at this moment. Applicants must provide proof that they have sufficient financial means to cover their own living expenses, with a minimum of 1,390 Euros per month, throughout the duration of the programme. In addition, all PhD candidates must cover tuition fee of 11,000 Euros and bench fee of 10,000 Euros for a 4 year programme. If required, the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment and the research group are able to assist accepted candidates in their search for grants and scholarships by providing letters of support.

The PhD track will commence with a one-year probationary period, at the end of which the candidate will be assessed by a peer-review process. A panel of both external and internal jurors will evaluate the research work for its feasibility, quality, and rigour. If the research work is deemed satisfactory, the track will be extended for an additional period of three years. The completion of a PhD thesis is expected to take four years in total. Dirk van den Heuvel will act as main supervisor while group members of Architecture, Culture and Modernity act as co-promoter and daily supervisor. Specific conditions will be determined according to the TU Delft's Doctoral Regulations and the rules and procedures defined by the Graduate School of the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment.

The candidates are supposed to carry out the following:

- writing a PhD thesis;
- submitting research results for publication in peer-reviewed academic journals;
- presenting papers at (international) conferences;
- organising and participating in reading and discussions groups, seminars and workshops.

Institutional Embedding

The Architecture and Democracy programme is organised by the Jaap Bakema Study Centre, the special research collaboration between the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment of the Delft University of Technology and Het Nieuwe Instituut in Rotterdam.

In Delft, the PhD candidates will work within the research group of Architecture, Culture and Modernity, which currently involves five PhD candidates, three postdoc fellows, and six Faculty members. Main focus of the research group are the multiple ways in which architecture as a discipline has absorbed and reflected the

conditions of modernity, including the rise of a mass society, new forms of (democratic) government systems, and concomitant issues of subject-formation, emancipation and citizens' empowerment. For more information on the profile of the Department of Architecture, including the research group Architecture, Culture and Modernity.

In addition to their participation in academic life at TU Delft, the PhD-candidates will be able to work with the staff and resources of Het Nieuwe Instituut to further their research and career. This is enabled by the special collaboration through the Jaap Bakema Study Centre, founded in 2013. It develops its research and activities programme on the basis of the holdings of the Dutch national collection of architecture and urban planning, housed at Het Nieuwe Instituut. The programme is situated at the intersections of advanced historical and theoretical studies, and urgent social issues. Results include experiments in exhibitions, in-depth book publications, public seminars, international summer schools and conferences, which explore new territories.

Next to the Architecture and Democracy programme (currently 2 PhDs), the Jaap Bakema Study Centre and Het Nieuwe Instituut participate in the programmes The Critical Visitor on cultural heritage spaces and questions of inclusion and intersectionality (NWO Smart Culture, 2 PhDs), and Communities of Tacit Knowledge in Architecture (TACK, EU Horizon 2020, 10 PhDs).

Requirements

Applicants must hold a master's degree in Architecture or Architectural History. The applicant must bring well-developed research skills, including the ability to formulate relevant and creative research questions and hypotheses, descriptive and analytical skills, and a clear and persuasive style of writing. Previous teaching and professional experience is considered helpful.

Applicants have an excellent, certifiable command of English, in reading, writing and speaking, and should be able to work both independently and as part of a team. We are looking for candidates with broad interests, who have a taste for intellectual and conceptual challenges, who share an appetite for in-depth archival research with a profound curiosity to work across disciplines and time periods. The aim is for making creative, explorative connections, and uncover hitherto unknown knowledge, in combination with public outreach activities.

Additional Graduate School requirements can be consulted online.

Submission

Your application must include the following:

- cover letter (one page), which discusses your motivation and interest to contribute to the Architecture and Democracy programme and the hosting institutes;
- Curriculum Vitae (max. ten pages);
- three referents or recommenders, but do not enclose any letters of recommendation in the application package.

Your full research proposal must include:

- dissertation title;
- abstract (300-500 words, including 5-10 keywords);
- introduction to the proposal (ca. 1500 words), incl. an explanation of your specific contribution to the field in terms of value, uniqueness, criticality and relevance;
- preliminary outline and table of contents (one page); planning, incl. overview of sources, research and reading (one page);
- preliminary, critical bibliography (max. five pages, incl an explanation of the selection, 300-500 words);
- writing examples (e.g., master's thesis, papers, and essays, max. three items).

Selection Procedure

The deadline for submission is 16 May 2022. The selection process involves two rounds of reviewing as well as an administrative check. The first, qualitative selection will be made by members of the research group Architecture, Culture and Modernity. Selected candidates will be invited for an interview and presentation in the form of a PhD Colloquium at Het Nieuwe Instituut in Rotterdam.

The colloquium is the second step in the review process. It will offer applicants the opportunity to visit the institutes involved, and meet with the current members, the PhD candidates of the research group, and the supervisors. External peers will be invited as well, to offer feedback and discussion of the presentations.

After the colloquium, the final selection takes place and the supervision team for each candidate will be discussed with the candidate. Successful proposals will be endorsed for a scientific and financial validation by the Department of Architecture, TU Delft. Based on the interview, presentation and the scientific and financial validation, the Department of Architecture will accept the selected candidates. In certain cases, the research group may ask the candidate to respond to questions and revise the proposal for a follow-up meeting.

Criteria for selection are: relevance to the call, originality, curiosity-driven approach, commandment of the subject-matter and an overview of the state-of-the-art of the research field, demonstration of critical reflection on the subject matter, eloquence and overall impression.

Please note, practical, yet crucial criteria involve organisation of (self-)funding, and immigration rules of the Netherlands, which will be part of the administrative review by the Department of Architecture.

Time Schedule

- Submission of Proposals: 16 May 2022
- Notification of Pre-selection: 27 June 2022
- PhD Colloquium with Het Nieuwe Instituut: 14 September 2022
- Notification of Acceptance: 14 October 2022
- Start of Research Work: to be discussed with candidates

For information and submission, please contact Dirk van den Heuvel: d.vandenheuvel@tudelft.nl