



CHALMERS
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

NAF Symposium 2019 in Gothenburg

- Call for Papers -

Approaches and Methods in Architectural Research

There is a significant need for up-to-date architectural knowledge in the current transformations of the built environments all around the world. New approaches are needed to integrate knowledge development from different contexts into architectural design and planning along with methods that can grasp complex architectural and urban processes. The aim of this conference is to display and critically reflect on the current development of approaches and methods in architectural research and practice. How can we produce relevant knowledge that helps us understand the complexities in contemporary architecture, landscape architecture and urbanism? In what way can we strengthen the relations between research and practice?

The architectural profession is currently undergoing profound changes in terms of education, design work and research. This calls for specifically articulated research competences, methods and processes. New design-, practice-, and arts-based approaches have resulted in new disciplines and new academic research, such as, for example, research by design, curriculum research and practise-based research. Novel concepts such as transdisciplinary and post normal science have also been widely discussed in the research community. Among architecture professionals, an increasing interest for research and knowledge development has resulted in fruitful collaborations between offices and academia and innovative funding solutions have occurred.

The Nordic countries have a long tradition of architectural research and formalised PhD education. The Scandinavian model, with its strong environments for innovation and societal impact, is currently gaining more and more interest internationally. This symposium addresses the above-mentioned model with a special focus on its development of approaches and methods in architectural research, education and practice. We invite contributions to discuss and present perspectives from both academia and professional practice, and especially their productive interaction and integration. We want to reflect on how architectural means and tools can be used as instigators and models for knowledge production and dissemination and how academia and practice can interact. How can we understand the relation between methods and the articulation of architectural knowledge? Of equal importance in this articulation are traditions, approaches, conditions and differences between research projects conducted in universities, art academies and architectural offices.

To understand the Scandinavian model and its traits is paramount for the discussions of this symposium. It will provide a qualified platform that can be developed further to address the future challenges of the architectural profession. There will be three key-note lectures and sessions with paper discussions. The symposium will curate the discussions within the following four tracks and their defined themes:

1. Material, Building design and programming

Increasing specialization within the architectural profession is a response to a higher complexity both within technology and building processes. It is also a response to a greater diversity among the users of the built environment, reflecting their ever-differentiating life styles. This track deals with multi-disciplinary research and practice as well as methods and means for mapping, orchestrating, analysing and communicating complex knowledge within planning and building processes.

There are many challenges to be addressed within this track. A first challenge to address is the future need to design for generality, long-time sustainability, robustness and health promotion. A second challenge to reflect on is the question of how technological developments affect the design of the built environment now and in the future. A third challenge is the paradigm shift from *design for the majority* to *design for all* or *universal design*. The terms “design for all” or “universal design” include housing design as well as city planning. Great resources, both human and economic, can be saved by creating accessibility for all, both in the physical and digital environment – a perspective that puts pressure on academia, practice and facilities management. These challenges urge us to form up-to-date design processes to match emerging needs for an ageing and urban population.

2. Urban, rural and regional landscapes

Cities and metropolitan regions are today facing great challenges regarding sustainable development. Climate change requires new solutions and priorities, focusing both on strategies to reduce climate impact and on adapting the built environment to the expected effects of climate change. Furthermore, urbanization, economic structural changes and increased inter-urban competition contribute to an increasing regional imbalance, with a concentration of power and resources in metropolitan regions. Ethnic and economic housing segregation contributes to inequality and social polarization, boosted by gentrification processes in many inner cities. A changed economic logic has influenced municipal resource priorities and competencies, focusing increasingly on competitiveness and labour markets, rather than distributing resources.

Against this background, this track invites researchers to discuss contemporary approaches and methods in urban design, planning research and practice. This track embraces contributions that shed light on how the architectural discipline can understand and tackle contemporary complexities within urban processes and produce knowledge for the future design of cities and metropolitan regions. In focus are analytical, interpretative and generative approaches and methods used to describe effects of different urban strategies, interpret and understand the built environment in a broader societal context and to develop sustainable urban design and planning solutions.

3. Renegotiating architectural practice and profession

This track invites you to discuss how changes in the Nordic society affect architecture as a profession and how these changes should be met. On one hand one can observe a radical transformation of the organizational form of the traditional architectural office. Interdisciplinary design teams and new kinds of hybrid and transdisciplinary collaborations tend to replace the former understanding and role of the architect as an individual designer and autonomous author. This can be seen not only as a response to new global demands but also as a need for collaboration with differentiated partners with specialist competences. On the other hand, another trend since the 1980s is market orientation producing new kinds of conflicting interests among key players in the building sector as well as among citizens, clients and professionals. Paradoxically, within the latter trend the architectural building itself - designed by architects - becomes an attractor for drawing visitors and investments to cities.

Assignments from public clients in the EU have to follow the procurement law. Power has been transferred to experts who scrutinize the architectural task and produce requirements that have to be met. Ever more administrative routines and demands emerge also as a result of new urban design ideologies such as “Green cities”, “sustainable design”, “low energy buildings” or “ecological design”, etc. This implies a need for integration of transdisciplinary knowledge into architecture as urban design and landscape architecture is growing also on the administrative level. In parallel to these new demands, the Nordic countries have been opening up for design collaboration across national boundaries.

4. Heritage, conservation and history

Architectural history and cultural heritage can be seen as significant recourses for future architectural design and a value in need of protection when urban and rural areas are transformed. In this context, compensation is a concept covering adjustment in planning and reconstruction of qualities and values affected by exploitation. Compensation measures are a new method for handling impact on cultural heritage in land-use planning.

This track is oriented towards professional practice conducted by architects and urban planners, architectural conservators/restorers and archaeologists. The key issue is how critical historical knowledge and discourses on cultural values can contribute to planning processes. We invite scholars to discuss (1) methods, tools, approaches and measures to compensate damage by exploitation of areas with cultural heritage, (2) policies in contemporary planning processes for safeguarding qualities in architecture and means for restoring value in urban design and landscapes, (3) experiences by architects, architectural conservators/restorers and archaeologists with reducing the loss of cultural heritage values, and finally (4) reconstruction, relocation and innovative solutions for taking care of and developing cultural values and qualities in architecture and the built environment in relation to the exploitation of land.

Submission

Abstracts and papers must be submitted in English, which is the official symposium language. Papers must be marked as either:

A. Scientific articles, B. Academic essays or C. Applied projects

Organizer

The 2019 NAF Symposium will take place in Gothenburg. The symposium is a joint venture between the Nordic Association of Architectural Research and the Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering, Chalmers University.

Organizing committee

From the Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering, Chalmers University:

- Dr. Marie Strid, Building Design
- Dr. Morgan Andersson, Building Design

From the Nordic Association of Architectural Research, NAF:

- Dr. Anne Elisabeth Toft, Aarhus School of Architecture + NAF
- Dr. Julia Fredriksson, Urban Design and Planning + NAF
- Dr. Magnus Rönn, Building Design + NAF

Time and venue

The symposium will take place 13-14 June 2019. Venue: Chalmers University, Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering, Sven Hultins Gata 6, Gothenburg.

Timetable – guidelines and important dates

An *abstract* of 300 words, a list of keywords (4-8), a title, subtitles, name of author and email address to corresponding author should be sent (by email) to the organization committee no later than 1 November 2018.

Authors whose abstracts are approved will be asked to submit a *full paper* no later than 1 April. The conference paper should be minimum 6000 words and should not exceed 8000 words, excluding abstract, references and figures. Further guidelines will later be sent to authors whose abstracts have been approved.

Please note the following dates for submission, review processes and symposium:

- Call for papers: 27 August
- Abstract, deadline: 1 November, acceptance: 15 December
- Full paper, deadline: 15 April
- Symposium: 13-14 June 2019

Conference Languages: English, the Nordic languages

Publication: A double-blind peer-reviewed proceedings publication will follow the symposium. The proceedings will be in English.

Conference fee: 150 euro for PhD students and 250 euro for senior researchers, teachers and practicing architects.

Contact: naf-symposium.ace@chalmers.se

Further information: Homepage under construction