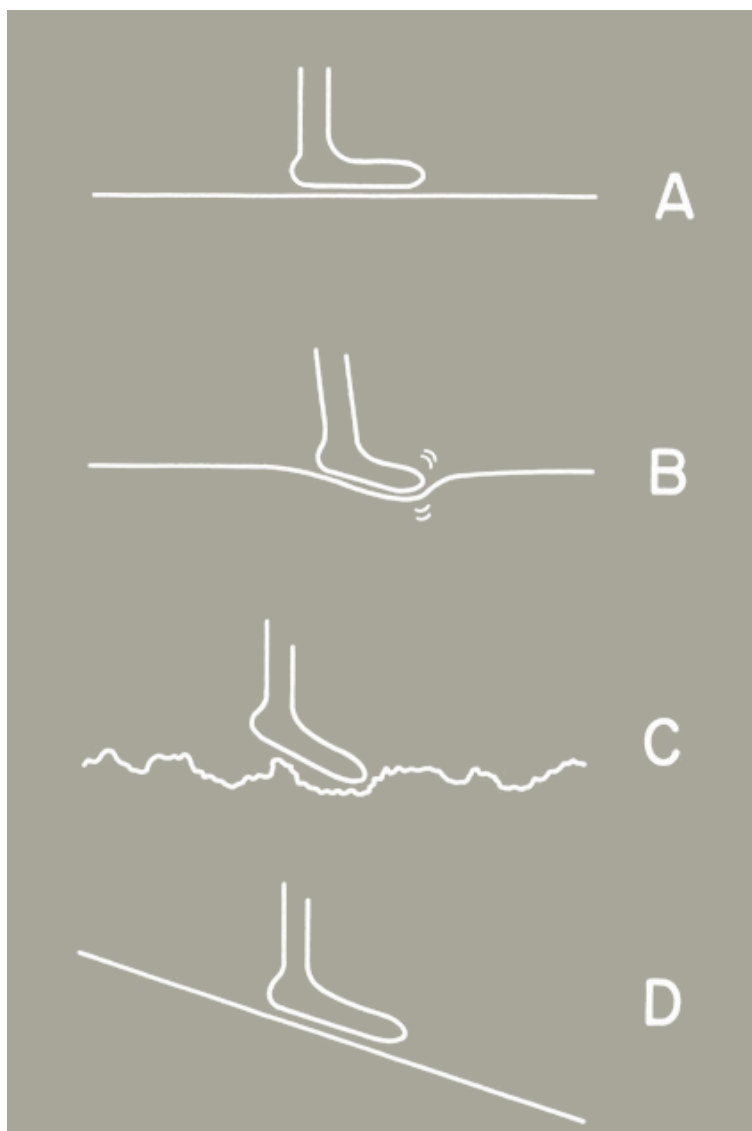




**Open Call for 2 PhD Candidates – February 2020**

Architecture Theory: Ecologies of Architecture

TU Delft Architecture, Academic Year 2021–2024



**The Axiology of Architecture:  
Rules, Norms and Architectural Values**

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# The Axiology of Architecture: Rules, Norms and Architectural Values

## 1. Introduction

Under the auspices of the Graduate School of the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment at Delft University of Technology, the academic group **Architecture Theory (AT)** invites PhD dissertation proposals to help expand its **Ecologies of Architecture** research portfolio.

Architecture Theory is part of the Department of Architecture's section **Theory and Territories**. We invite all interested academic and/or professional candidates – qualified to pursue PhD-level research work and aligned with the group's research agenda – to submit their applications before **Monday, 6 April 2020**.

The Ecologies of Architecture research group (**EoA**) conducts in-depth, independent research related to the major themes of the Architecture Theory's research and education programme. With this call, the **EoA** is looking for innovative, cutting-edge research proposals related to the **Architecture of Value** and the derivative value of architecture.

## 2. Research Group: Ecologies of Architecture

The **EoA** adopts a 'minor tradition' that rejects binary oppositions and instead promotes **relational thinking**. The relation does not come *after* the constitution of the terms. Rather, objects and subjects individuate through the relation *of* mutual determination. Relational thinking forms the basis of an ecological approach where the problem of fact and value can, and must be, rethought in the spirit of speculative pragmatism.

The **EoA** strives to overcome the lingering modernist techno-determinism, without regressing to the recursive postmodern relativism. Its ontogenetic 'formula' is: neither the ghost, nor the machine. Neither organicism, nor mechanism, but **machinism** which is not susceptible to any definitive formalisation as it continually gives rise to new assemblages and values that have not yet existed.

The **EoA** distances itself from anthropocentrism, rethinks subjectivity and ethics in terms of 'nonhuman' forces within the human, emphasises **heteropoiesis** as the organising power of transversal onto-epistemologies, and explores the political ramifications of these processes for the discipline of architecture. From this perspective, architecture does not represent culture but *is* a machinism of culture. Its highest ambition is to invent a new value for a new collectivity.

For further information on the **EoA** research please visit:

<https://www.tudelft.nl/en/architecture-and-the-built-environment/about-the-faculty/departments/architecture/organisation/disciplines/architecture-theory/research-publications/>

## 3. Programme: The Axiology of Architecture

The Affective Turn has rendered some traditional issues obsolete but introduced new ones, most notably those concerning the source of normativity. Unlike previous social formations, capitalism is incapable of providing a code that will apply to the *whole* of the social field. When pondering the issue of whether there can be a **material ethics**, one has to acknowledge that the source of critique cannot come by way of a transcendental intrusion. It needs to operate at the level of production. The conditions of critique and creation collapse so as to debunk the genesis of thinking in thought itself. Thus, **the question is not how architectural criticism serves architecture, but how architecture itself becomes a medium for critical activity**. To paraphrase the filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard: not a just architecture, just an architecture.

The source of any normativity must not come from the outside. Rule-bonding needs to operate at its own terms which means that 'deviations' are not abnormal but normally *anomalous*. In other words, **Truth and Falsity are not values that exist outside the constitutive problematic fields that give them sense**. Ethics, framed in this way, is a problem of *power* and not duty. The change of attitude is best exemplified by the term 'response-ability' as in the capacity to respond. In contrast to the (liberal individual) *moralising* notion of responsibility, Donna Haraway's neologism is fully relational, i.e. *ethical*. The notion of 'transgressing the law' does not make any sense because the law does not exist as an external and transcendent *moral* (absolute) imperative that would be possible for anyone to follow or transgress. If there is a law, it unwittingly regulates real behaviours.

**Neo-materialist architectural axiology relies on the *immanent* criteria of evaluation**, i.e. the self-produced and constantly individuating enabling constraints. This is to say that laws, norms, and rules are *ethical* (revisable) and *plastic* (where the condition is never bigger than the conditioned). They are contingently obligatory and not logically necessary: all actual causes produce certain virtual effects that in turn constrain the degrees of freedom at the level of actuality by producing path-dependencies or the 'lure' of the virtual.

The **AT** academic group and the **EoA** research group are looking for PhD candidates that are willing to explore the relations between architectural rules, norms and values. The axiological relations are in dire need of production, exploration, investigation, testing and experimenting with. The effective value of research is to be located in this probing. Specifically, research proposals should address at some of the following:

- 3.1** Architectural ethics beyond binary oppositions, modes of judgment and moralistic (transcendental) presuppositions;
- 3.2** The role of affect in the production and consumption of architecture;
- 3.3** The importance of enabling constraints in the emergence of architectural values;
- 3.4** The co-constitutive relation between architectural norms, rules and values as an (immanent) autocatalytic process.

#### 4. Terms

Please note that TU Delft does not provide financial support and that the successful applicants must cover a tuition fee over a period of four years. Additionally, under Dutch law, applicants must provide proof that they have sufficient financial means to cover their living expenses, with a minimum of € 1.400 per month. More information on fees and funding can be found here:

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

The PhD candidate will conduct scholarly research and other related activities. The candidate will be fully integrated into the Architecture Theory research staff, working closely with its members. The research group will provide a collaborative platform for gaining extensive experience and skills for independent research work.

The Department of Architecture will provide:

- 4.1** Supervision by promoter and co-promoters during the various phases of the doctoral dissertation (including periodic seminars and peer review colloquia);
- 4.2** Active support for conference presentations, conference organisation, and publication of peer-reviewed papers;
- 4.3** Participation in the doctoral education programme of the Graduate School and other relevant activities organised in the Department of Architecture;
- 4.4** Provision of flexible workplace and access to campus facilities.

The candidates will be required to carry out the following tasks:

- 4.5** Writing a PhD thesis;
- 4.6** Submitting research results for publication in peer-review academic journals;
- 4.7** Presenting papers at international conferences;
- 4.8** Organising and participating in reading groups, seminars and workshops.

The PhD track will commence with a one-year probationary period at the end of which the candidate will submit to the peer-review assessment. A review panel of both external and internal jury members will evaluate the research work for its quality and rigour. Upon a positive assessment, the track will be extended for an additional period of three years. We expect completion of a PhD thesis in approximately four years overall. The Theory and Territories section will appoint the promoter: dr.ir. **Marc Schoonderbeek**; and the **AT** academic group will provide co-promoters: dr.ir. **Andrej Radman** & dr.ir. **Stavros Kousoulas**.

Any specific conditions will be determined in accordance with the TU Delft's Doctorate Regulations and the Graduate School rules that can be found here:

<https://www.tudelft.nl/en/architecture-and-the-built-environment/research/graduate-school-a-be/>

## 5. Qualifications

We are inviting candidates interested in pursuing future-oriented trend-setting contemporary discourse in architecture, focusing on theoretical and transdisciplinary issues, based on an awareness of the societal, political, ecological and technological challenges in and of the built environment. The applicant must hold a Master's degree (MSc. Arch. or M. Arch) or equivalent degree in Architecture or Architectural Theory. Any previous teaching and/or professional experience will be considered an advantage. The applicant must possess an excellent command of English and be able to work independently and in a team.

The successful candidate is expected to:

- 5.1** Situate the dissertation within the scope of the **EoA** research;
- 5.2** Clearly present the hypothesis and the theoretical framework of the dissertation;
- 5.3** Demonstrate the proposition's value and contribution to the existing discourse;
- 5.4** Elaborate on the overall ambition of the research work.

## 6. Submission Requirements

- 6.1 Cover Letter** (one A4)  
A letter of motivation explaining how the proposal is aligned with the **EoA**'s research;
- 6.2 Full CV**  
Comprehensive chronological information on applicant's academic and professional experience, as well as any pertinent record of publication (please do not include any information prior to the first year of your university-level education);
- 6.3 Names and contact information of three referees**  
Please mention in which capacity they are familiar with your qualifications and capabilities (e.g. teacher, employer, colleague, etc.). Do not enclose any letters of reference in the application package. We will contact your referees directly;
- 6.4 Research Précis**
  - 6.4.1 Provisional Title**
  - 6.4.2 Abstract**  
Short summary (300-500 words, including 5 keywords);
  - 6.4.3 Introduction**  
A general introduction to the project, framing it conceptually and/or thematically (approx. 1500 words);
  - 6.4.4 Preliminary Outline**  
A tentative table of contents describing the overall intended structure;

#### **6.4.5 Innovativeness, Ambition and Uniqueness**

Clearly and succinctly spelled out question(s) or hypotheses and carefully articulated aims and ambitions of the proposal (one A4);

#### **6.4.6 Research Significance**

Relevance, originality and the overall contribution of the proposal to the discourse of architecture in general and its position within the framework of the **EoA** research in particular (one A4);

#### **6.4.7 Preliminary Annotated Bibliography**

#### **6.4.8 Copy of Master's Degree**

#### **6.4.9 Addendum**

You may include anything you find relevant to introducing yourself as a potential PhD candidate (e.g. portfolio-type information, published paper, etc.).

#### **6.5 Document Length**

The first draft research should be limited to +/- 2500 words (excluding bibliography & addendum).

#### **6.6 Submission Specifications**

All the above-mentioned items must be consolidated in one PDF file of no more than 30 pages and 20 MB.

Please name the PDF file as: *Lastname\_Keyword.pdf* (e.g. Guattari\_Ecosophy.pdf).

### **7. Deadline**

April 6, 2020

### **8. Contact Information and Submission**

Andrej Radman (a.radman@tudelft.nl)

### **9. Selection Process**

After an initial screening, the departmental research committee and the **EoA** research group will make a short-list and invite the candidates for an interview and presentation, which will also include a Q&A session. The review criteria for selection are: relevance to the call, originality in approach, command of the subject-matter and overview of the research field, demonstration of critical reflection on the subject matter, eloquence and overall impression. Candidates will be assessed on the basis of the interview, presentation and the scientific and financial validation. In some cases they may be required to answer additional questions and revise the proposal for a follow-up meeting before the final decision is made.

### **10. Schedule**

<b>10.1</b>	Invitation	17 February 2020
<b>10.2</b>	Submission	6 April 2020
<b>10.4</b>	Interview and Presentation	15 June 2020
<b>10.5</b>	Notification of Acceptance	6 July 2020
<b>10.6</b>	Start of Research Work (subject to meeting Graduate School requirements)	September 2020
<b>10.7</b>	One-Year Peer-Review	September 2021
<b>10.8</b>	Completion	September 2024