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# Research Reports

—the Collections, the Users, and

the Alumni Center

Name: Yingzhu Mao  
Student: 4509188  
Email:  
Studio: Interiors, buildings, cities / Fall year  
Tutor: Irene Cieraad Research Seminar AR3Ai 055  
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## **Part One—Research Proposal**

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## 1. Introduction

The part 1 is about the intellectual and theoretical underpinning of my design proposal, which focus on the collections, the user groups and the role of urban institution. In order to bring different users together in this collection building, and use this urban institution to improve the town-gown relations, the initial idea is to reorganize the collections, creating multi-layered values out of them. The collection themselves become no longer just precious objects but the exciter and propulsion of social interaction and understanding, making the collection building an academic club of broader users.

Among the findings, a matter of concern is that a large proportion of the users of the city of Delft are constitute of the alumni of TU Delft, or the future alumni (current students), and the history of the collections and their collectors are as well almost equivalently a history of the alumni. This finding lead to the subsequent proposal of an alumni center and the research focused on it.

## 2. Artefacts-nature of the collections

Due to the limit of lifespan of the human being, museums, galleries and archives are, quite specifically, charged by society with the job of keeping things for the benefit of future generations. "This long-term transmission in itself and the great bulk of collections have been in place for some considerable time contributes its own kind of legitimacy, human nature being what it is. These institutions are an important part of the way society makes its history.<sup>1</sup>"

However, collections are made by people within particular contexts, which sometimes forms comprehension barriers for the audience to the artefacts across time, locations and culture backgrounds. In this case, audience easily feel themselves nothing to do with the collections and miss the potential opportunity to understand the value.

So it is essential to get the visitors and audience connected to the artefacts that presented and stored in our new urban institution.

To reveal the value and establish the relationship between artefacts and audience, we have to get a closer and better look at the value the collections take with them.

"Collectors have always devised strategies in which their collections help them to define their gender, establish their place in time and space, reconcile their need for creative place by allowing decisions about interrelationships, and gain scope for dreams of completion and perfection.<sup>2</sup>" In another word, collecting is for the collectors a way of organizing the surrounding material world and transforming it into sense.

So, we should understand that collections are not privileged tools to tell transparent stories about the nature of things, but are themselves part of social practice in a social world. They produce rather than 'discover' knowledge. So

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<sup>1</sup> Pearce 1999: 14.

<sup>2</sup> Pearce 1999: 15.

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openness of activity is crucial, for people to get their own interpretation and connection to artefacts. That is to say, open storage, object handling sessions, self-study rooms and resource centers might be better choice for users rather than just a place for display.

Meanwhile, for an urban institution, it has messages to tell through the collections, for instance, the history and reputation of the university. In another word, there are favored interpretation, more or less, that are looking forward to be transmitted by material organization and understood by visitors. It is an intellectual challenge for the curators.

A small summary: a good way of organizing collections in the new institution should be found to get the favored message transmitted and understand by the visitors, and at the same time, establish mutually connections with visitors through their personal exploration and interpretation.

In order to find a good solution, we should at least know what kind of role the institution would like to play in the city center and the messages it hopes to convey and look at the characteristic of the main users (students/residents/tourists), especially in the context of the city of Delft.

### **3. Users-three groups of people**

#### **Students:**

Evidently, the students and researchers from TU Delft and other educational institutions in the city compose the major group of users in this future institution. As discussed before, open storage, self-study rooms and resource centers make it excellent place for study and research. However, what makes it essentially different from the existing TU library, despite of better accessibilities to resource?

As a matter of fact, most of the students living in the city of Delft are international students (accommodating themselves close to the university) rather than Dutch students (living at home in another city and commuting to university). Meanwhile, considering every faculty having its own study facilities, open to students during weekdays, the shared study facilities such as TU library always have their peak-hours on Saturdays and Sundays, mainly used as self-study rooms rather than resource centers.

So we can imagine, for the student group, the advantages of the new institution in the historical city center to the existing central library of TU would be:

1. Being close to the city center and Delft station, it's more accessible for students living in and outside the city, which may also contribute to communication opportunities with a more balanced mix of the foreign and local students.
2. The surrounding facilities in the city such as restaurants, cafés, and shops provide supports for students to stay longer, which provides

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economic chances for local business and chances for communication between students and local people.

3. Being an information hub and collection storage, the institution provides wider accessibilities to study resources. The heritage collections particularly introduce the international students to the Dutch cultural and the history of the city and the university.

**Residents:**

Similar to other host cities of universities, Delft accommodates a large population of residents relevant to the university, including graduates and people who come to work in the university-related companies and associations. Thus, people in this group always have certain professions related to corresponding university specialties. Different from the restrictions of books in the TU library, the new institution can offer these groups of people access to the historical and latest achievements of the TU researches and other information.

For the original inhabitants, the institution also provides opportunities for their children to know more about the university. With certain activities between students (especially international students) and residents, they might get a better understanding of each other, while the conflicts between these two groups are frequently seen in the city.

**Tourists:**

With lots of historical heritages and lovely cityscape, Delft is a popular tourist city in the Netherlands. Being in the midway from Rotterdam to Den Haag, tourists always choose to accommodate themselves in either of these cities and drop by for a one-day trip.

Since Delft collection also includes a large amount of cultural artefacts related to the history of the city, and the tourist spots and their stories, which provides chances for the tourists who want to explore more about the story behind. Meanwhile, tourists usually being individuals with certain professions may also find their own interests in the research-related collections.

From the perspective of the university, this is also an opportunity to establish its reputation among domestic and foreign visitors, after long-time geographical staying outside of the city center.

#### **4. Urban Institution-“Town-Gown” Relations**

Universities are important players in the global development of knowledge economy, alongside being significant contributors to the economic development of their host cities. They are both significant knowledge enterprises and the suppliers of the human and intellectual capital on which the knowledge-based economy depends<sup>1</sup>.

In this part, issues are described surrounding two main topics: 1. the benefits of university activities and the mechanisms through which they occur; 2. how the spatial development of universities can be one of the main meeting

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<sup>1</sup> Benneworth 2010: 1611.

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points between the city and university and how it can be used for stimulating economic development and managing growth. The first one might provide a clue on the future activities in the new urban institution; the second indicates how the new institution as a campus project could develop partnerships between universities and city authorities for mutual benefit.

### **Topic 1:**

The paper "Conceptualizing the Regional Roles of Universities Implications and Contradictions" by Uyarra, 2010, identifies five key "roles" of universities (Table 1) in relation to their contribution to regional innovation as they are reflected in the literature. First, universities are considered by early studies primarily as producers of scientific knowledge—"knowledge factories"—which can have a local economic impact in the form of spillovers (the second column of table 1). Second, studies of university–industry links assume a "relational" or collaborative role of universities, acknowledging a variety of bi-directional links and processes for knowledge sharing between firms and universities (the third column). More recently, the commercial exploitation of university research has become a policy imperative. This more "entrepreneurial" aspect of universities is encouraged via dedicated organizational arrangements in universities, such as technology transfer offices and science parks, as well as legal changes and incentive structures (the fourth column). Fourth, innovation system studies see universities as boundary spanning institutional "nodes", whose influence will be shaped by the specific regional innovation system in which they are embedded (the fifth column). A fifth goes beyond universities providing support for innovation in the narrow sense; they have ascribed a predominantly "developmental" role, i.e. as actors actively engaged in the economic development of the local and regional areas in which they are located (the sixth column).<sup>1</sup>

These dimensions could be used to identify some relatively stylized differentiation of the way in which TU Delft is portrayed in relation to its contribution to regional development. Planning of the future program of the new institution tends to reflect one or a combination of several of these dimensions or roles. Making these roles explicit can help get a better idea of the expected influence and impact of the university on the local and regional areas.

In the case of Delft, the TU Delft obviously play a combination roles of all these dimensions. The "entrepreneurial" aspect of TU Delft is shown as technology transfer offices and the Delft Science Park, as well as legal changes and incentive structures. Moreover, TU Delft plays a predominantly "developmental" role, actively engaged in the economic development of the local and regional areas and even across the nationwide. So the future program of the new institution should reflect the leadership role of the university, meet the mutual needs of different parties, which goes beyond the business and

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<sup>1</sup> Uyarra 2010: 1229.

knowledge-related partners and include the local residents as well.

Table 1. Summary: roles, determinants and engagement modes of universities

Model	Knowledge “factory”	Relational university	Entrepreneurial university	Systemic university	Engaged university
Main role of universities	Production of scientific knowledge	Exchange of knowledge	Active commercialization role	Boundary-spanning role	Developmental role
Main unit of analysis	Innovation outputs	Linkages	Intermediaries (e.g. TTOs)	Systems/networks	Spaces of governance
Main partners/beneficiaries	High-tech firms located in proximity to universities	Large manufacturing firms	Large manufacturing firms Spin-off firms	Regional clusters Regional SMEs	Regional stakeholders
Directionality of engagement	Unidirectional (implicit)	Bi-directional (implicit)	Bi-directional (explicit)	Triple-helix (universities, industry and government)	Responsive
Dominant methodology	Industrial surveys Citation count Production function analysis	Industrial surveys Case studies	Surveys of university TT managers	National and regional innovation surveys Case studies	Case studies
Key factors influencing impact	Research intensity/inputs Geographical proximity	Structural factors (size of firm, age, sector, R&D intensity) Innovation strategy	Organizational structures/forms Managerial practices Faculty behaviour/incentives	Regional system configuration Regional policy Institutional capacity of universities	Number and synergies between universities University leadership Joined up policies/incentives
Policy implications	Co-location of firms and universities. Increased funding for research	Some links should be promoted vis-à-vis others	Intermediaries and organizational arrangements/incentives are needed to ensure links	Institutional arrangements are important to ensure linkages	Joining up of universities missions and other policies at different levels

Table 1 Uyarra, 2010

## Topic 2:

In the *“Building Localized Interactions between Universities and Cities Through University Spatial Development”* by Benneworth, five cases were used to show that university—city collaborative initiatives focused on the university properties represent a desire to produce creative and competitive new urban spaces, which reinforce the position of the university and the city in global economy. Critically, this is not a straightforward process, and problems arise in the course of that interaction.

The modes of engagement encountered in this paper are summarized in Table 2, which also includes the modes of engagement.

These features come together to suggest a set of modes of “urban engagement” by universities, which go beyond the standalone or the incubator/science park models. Their key features are in contributing to universities competing in their own global networks, they help the cities improve their urban management as a first step towards improving urban competitiveness and that there are learning processes between university and city actors in seeking to resolve the problems and tensions that arise in promoting these projects. These “modes of engagement” have salience as much for universities’ teaching and research missions as for the third mission, through the provision of space for teaching and research activities, and its role in their competition for staff, students and resources. In turn, this suggests that these forms of engagement may also more substantially influence university institutional arrangements than the influence of high-technology engagement.

The kind of engagement reflects the different needs of the host city. In Enschede, the university was prepared to completely reorganize its spatial structure to optimize its engagement activities. In both QUT and Newcastle,

engagement involved both strengthening research structures to allow coherent units to be moved to campuses and rethinking the relationship between different physical zones of the campus to ensure sufficient access to services. In Cambridge, MA, there was almost a “developmental” form of engagement with the two universities encouraging the local government structure to regard the universities more seriously as a strategic asset.

**Table 2.** Putative modes of civic engagement by universities

	University institutional approach	Contribution to urban management	Tensions between university and urban needs
High-technology engagement	Creating “extended development periphery”	Building new economic sectors, raising demand	Isolation between new sectors and old industries
Standalone campus	Creating a new campus or re-erecting walls to minimize local uncertainties	Delegating responsibilities for negative externalities to local authorities	University brings big costs to locality while spreading benefits more widely
Regional engagement	Creating new regional role for localized campus	Image building of a new urban quarter	Winners and losers (commuting and housing) not same
Multiple interfaces	Selected opening up to support existing growth clusters	Strengthening localized specialization/ clustering	Undermining coherent campus, diluting research excellence
Collaborative growth management	Creating/working with new institutional structure set	Developmental role: helping existing networks	Tangling of interests—partners or developers?

Table 2 Benneworth, 2010

As for the TU Delft, by creating extended development periphery and gradually moving out of the inner city, it set up a standalone campus next to the city center (“High-technology engagement” and “Standalone campus”, see table 2). As a result, there still remains the isolation between the new campus and the city. University brings big costs to locality while spreading benefits more widely.

The new project of collection building in the inner city is to create new regional role for the campus. Rather than being totally professional, high-tech and isolated from the normal city life, the institution gives an open, modest and welcoming image to the public.

## 5. A New way of organizing collections

The preceding part of the text talks about three main perspectives: the artefacts (Delft collections collected by TU), the urban institution and the future users. The last part is to relate them to each other.

The main purpose of the report is to explore and imagine a new way in the new institution of organizing the collections and relevant activities, connecting the past and the latest, to get the future users really involved in, through which better relationships among different user groups are established, and so is that



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between the city and the university. Together, it could be a meeting point at different aspects that used for the stimulating intellectual, cultural and economic development.

To illustrate the collection system, an example about the mapping technology is introduced:

As part of the many old objects and instruments in the university collection, two theodolites are now stored in the basement of TU Delft library (fig.1). These two delicate instruments were once used to draw the first map of the whole country of the Netherlands. The way of the operation was firstly locate the churches of every city with these instruments and then draw the rest of the city accordingly. They are from many aspects quite valuable artefacts that deserve a better exhibition/storage space and worthwhile to be introduced to people, rather than being only accessible by appointment and exposed at few occasions.

However, even if they are settled at places with more accessibility accompanied with introduction, most beholders would still find these antiques nothing to do with them.

Actually, researchers and students in TU Delft nowadays are still working on the mapping technologies. From theodolite to total station, then to GPS (Global Positioning System), to the latest GNSS (global navigation satellite system), mapping technologies have developed greatly since the first maps. Specifically, the track "geosciences and remote sensing" under the department of Civil Engineering studies the LiDAR, Hyperspectral Remote Sensing, InSAR technologies and so on, which are related to the GNSS.

It would be nice for researchers in relevant field and interested student to get a whole view on the development of mapping technologies from the very first collections to the latest.

Nevertheless, these studies and researched still seem quite alien to normal beholders. Even so, people would understand how the technique has developed by looking at the maps from the early, sketchy ones to much more accurate ones and even to 3D maps nowadays. Also, everyone uses location technique in his daily life with the GPS (actually GNSS) in the phone. Every time you see yourself moving as a point in the digital maps, there are two levels of technologies, image identification for building up 3D maps and the location technique for the real-time position. People would also understand why there should be inaccurate measurements by big area of water when using location service of the phone, if they know about the reflected laser light plays an interference signal to the navigation satellite system.

At a certain point, all of the knowledge together gives the normal beholders a better understanding of the antique collections and the very edge-cutting researches, which is no longer the privilege to professionals, but something relevant to the daily life.

In addition, several collections could be integrated. For instance, in this case, the satellite collection from the faculty of the aerospace engineering could be placed next to or linked to the mapping instrument collection, providing

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related knowledge that the beholders might also interest themselves in. It's much like the marketing method to put tomato sauce next to the spaghetti, according the consuming behavior rather than the category of goods.

Meanwhile, the reputation of the university is built during this process as knowledge enterprises and the suppliers of the human and intellectual capital.

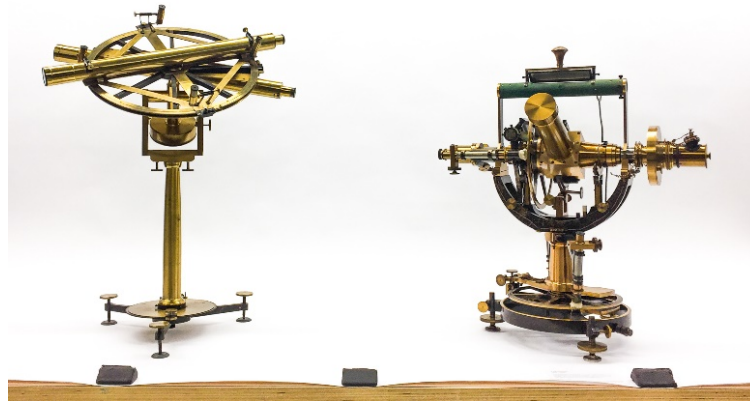


Figure 1 Theodolites. Photo credit to author.

## 6. Conclusion

To conclude, the heritage collection (mostly related to some specific disciplines), the corresponding frontier research and their applications in the life together form a new mixed collection. These three layers represent different layers of value, which meets the needs of different groups of users, providing diverse possibilities for interpretation, promoting personal connection between the institution and the users. As visitors having their own professional field, interconversions between professional and layman occur confronted with different collections, which provides communication opportunities among different groups of people. Meanwhile, the engagement of the institution in the urban environment provides meeting points for local authorities, companies of mutual developments.

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## **Part Two—Delft as a Knowledge City**

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## 1. Delft's situation—geographic position and city image

Delft enjoys an excellent national and international accessibility because of its privileged location in the south wing of the Randstad, between Den Haag and Rotterdam (Fig. 1). It's just an hour by train from Amsterdam and within 15min from den Haag and Rotterdam. Meanwhile, Delft is the seat of the oldest, most prestigious and most international of the three technical universities in the Netherlands. The city also houses many other research institutions and knowledge-intensive firms, with the mission to create added value from knowledge they generates. The most salient is TNO, the Organization for Applied Scientific Research. As a result, the city accommodates many students (mostly international students), knowledge workers and researchers. However, because of the great accessibility, relatively high house rent, and less recreation facilities, large percentage of these people are commuters.

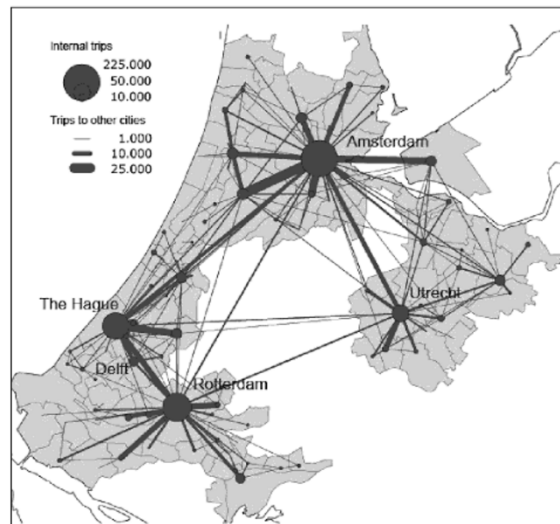


Figure 1 Daily home-work mobility flows in the Randstad

Furthermore, the city is world-known for its characteristic blue ceramic pottery and has a rich cultural heritage in the small but well-preserved historical inner city. Delft attracts a good number of day-trippers and foreign tourists. Similarly, tourists of Delft tend to pay a one-day tour to Delft rather than choosing the tourism accommodation in Delft, as the city sits right in the middle of another two popular big cities den Haag and Rotterdam, and offers less lodging options.



Figure 2 Inner city facilities used by tourists

Sustainable development of a city is often considered to depend on its balanced use by different groups of people. The more the local residents, the knowledge workers and researchers, students and university staff, the graduates, the tourists and other urban participants can obtain the jobs, housing, and amenities they desire, the more they can participate in the economic, public, and cultural life of the city, the more sustainable the city is. These groups are also the potential users of the collection building, being part of the story of the future urban institution. Here, the commuting pattern plays a disadvantaged factor to the social participation, in view of that many people won't even spend their time in the city during nonworking hours.

## 2. A history of the university in town

Although the university only received its current name in 1986, it has been providing technical education for 160 years. On January 8th, 1842, King Willem II founded the *'Royal Academy for the education of civilian engineers, to serve nation and industry, and of apprentices for trade'*. After several alteration, on September 1st, 1986, it was officially renamed as *Delft University of Technology*, more commonly known as TU Delft.

Previously, the campus was mainly located in the historical city center. Professors lived nearby, with the social networks based on the city (Fig. 3). The black blocks represent the former university buildings, and the yellow the current ones. Obviously, the campus used to be much smaller and more connected to the inner city.

I keep wondering how the life was like before the campus gradually disaffiliated itself from the inner city. Students lived next door to their professors,

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and met other students and graduates at the professors'; amenities was extremely accessible, including restaurants, cafés, clubs, where people met informally; jobs might be a problem for graduates if they would like to stay longer in Delft but found a job in another city, when commuting was not so convenient in those days.



Figure 3 University Buildings

### **3. Knowledge city, creative economy and the business climate of Delft**

TU Delft and TNO constitute the backbone of the knowledge capacity in

Delft. TUD has about 4500 employees and over 16000 students<sup>1</sup>, making it the largest university of technology in the Netherlands. TNO has several locations in Delft, most of which are adjacent or inside the TUD campus, with more than 1200 employees. Delft also harbors two higher vocational training institutions and the UNESCO-IHE Institution for water education.

The city also houses a great many knowledge-based firms and organizations (Fig.4). These are spread relatively equally across the city. However, the comparison of Figure 4 with Figure 5 shows relatively few jobs in the historical city center, reflecting the rather small size of firms and organizations in this area, which is also confirmed in the investigation of the urban presence by mapping the potential visitors in the inner-city (Fig.6).

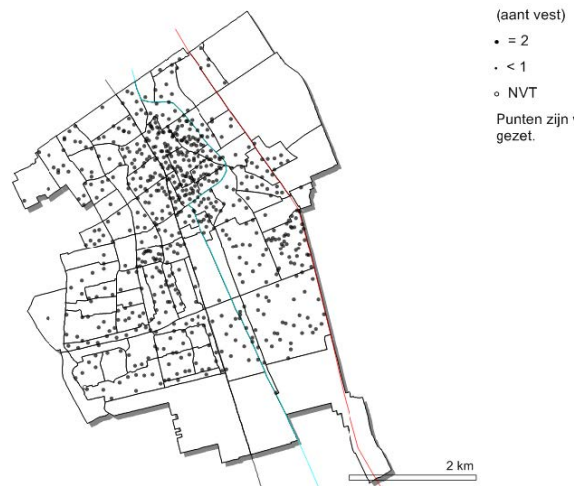


Figure 4 Location of knowledge-based firms and organizations in Delft (1 Jan. 2008)

Source: Haaglanden register of companies



Figure 5 Location of knowledge workers in Delft (1 Jan. 2008)

Source: Haaglanden register of companies

<sup>1</sup> Facts & Figures, Annual Book of TU Delft, 2015





Figure 6 Offices in the historical city center

On the contrary, Figure 5 shows the north side of Delft is occupied by a single firm- DSM Gist, and the east side accommodates three significant concentrations of knowledge workers in TUD and TNO combined with Delft Science Park, where quite a number of technology firms are established.

The different scales of the firms inside and outside the historical city center also reflect the different natures of firms and workers respectively.

Creative workers from small studios and ateliers are the largest subsector in the inner city, including many architects and designers, which can be related to the university's faculties of architecture and industrial design, both the largest of their kind in the Netherlands.

On the other hand, technology workers in large companies outside the inner city constitute another big group of users in Delft. An important project is the large science park for knowledge companies called Technopolis, which is located to the southeast of the campus. No matter how successful the project is, it probably will not have great local impact since it will reproduce the existing commuting trends. Most of the knowledge institutions in Delft are precisely located along the River Schie and the A13 highway, at the south of the city, while the inner city still has small amount of jobs to offer.

Regarding the local knowledge networks, TU Delft generates spin-offs and maintains relations with local firms. However, the relations that could directly contribute to knowledge valorization is limited. Knowledge valorization refers to

the utilization of scientific knowledge in practice. Examples include developing a product or a medicine, or applying scientific knowledge to a system or process. In the case of Delft, the firms which use the patent of the university only account for only 5 percentage of the whole, and those have the relation of forward and backward supplies only account for 15. (Table 1)

Table 1 Types of relations between knowledge-intensive firms and the TU Delft.

Category	Type of relations	Percentage of firms
Informal	Use of library	35
	Attendance of public lectures and meetings	45
	Personal contact with lecturers and researchers	50
Formal	Use of patent	5
	Use of laboratories	10
	Forward and backward supplies	15
Education and Personnel oriented	Attending (post)academic courses	10
	Cooperation in doctoral research	10
	Taking graduates into employment	40
	Apprenticeships and final projects	45

Source: Bakkeren & Stoffels, 2004, p.14.

An important way to improve the knowledge valorization is through the promotion of the techno-starters. YES!Delft, is such an organization, aiming to turn promising technology ideas and teams into solid startups and grow them to successful companies, by offering guidance and support to graduates, scientists, engineers and professionals in their startup journey. The office of YES!Delft is also located to the southeast of the campus, far away from the city center. So YES!Delft might be also a future client of the collection building for some certain events when more local interaction and local impact is expected.

#### 4. The habitability, the social climate of Delft

Housing and the right amenities are crucial elements of the habitability of a city to attract settlers and hence to contribute to sustainable urban development.

##### **-housing availability**

The shortage of housing in Delft has been a problematic issue in Delft for a long time, which partly explains the large outflow of graduates, the potential techno-starters. Foreign students also complain that their accommodation, arranged by the TU Delft, is too expensive, especially if they want to live near to the campus and city center. Some of them are even arranged to live in Den Haag and Leiden for the first year. The shortage of affordable and adequate housing mainly affects lower-income groups and knowledge workers in artistic fields such as architecture or design, who would prefer inner city environments.

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On the contrary, those in applied sciences and technical fields would prefer suburban environments or smaller urban settings<sup>1</sup>.

### **-amenities**

The attractiveness of Delft's historical center is widely recognized at national level. Delft has many museums, souvenir shops, historic monuments and several seasonal events and festivals. Besides 13 museums, there are 2 blue-porcelain workshops, 23 art galleries and ateliers in the whole city.

However, the situation of amenities for Delft's young residents is not too positive. Not surprisingly, young people consider Delft a boring place to live in. It misses facilities with the right atmosphere for people to meet informally. Café, restaurants, clubs, and places to go out are not satisfying enough.

Figure 7 shows that there is a significant concentration of restaurants and cafes around the very center of the inner city, namely the Market Square the old church and the Beestenmarkt, where the tourism spots gather and tourists visit the most. Most of the restaurants and cafes in this area are largely depend on tourism.



Figure 7 Restaurants and cafes in the historical city center

Thanks to the renovation of the Zuidpoort, dedicated to housing, commerce, and cultural functions, the quality of catering and cultural amenities is improved (Fig.8). This inner-city project includes shops for fashion and luxury goods, a large underground parking garage, and the relocation of the library, media and art center in front of the cinema and theater to conform a cultural corner. Actually, the site of the new collection building is just across the street and canal, northwest to this cultural corner, 2min by walk. As a cultural and

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<sup>1</sup> Marlet & van Woerkens, 2004

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knowledge center, the new institution is another enhancer to improvement of the amenity facilities in the inner city.

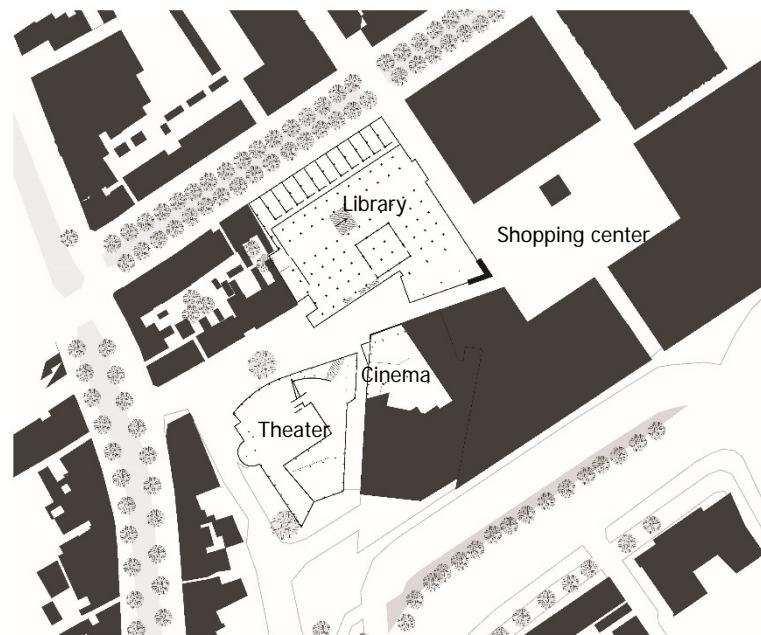


Figure 8 Zuidpoort

The city center is not especially lively and attractive for the young, artistic, and intellectuals. However the situation of the university campus is even worse. The comments of Richard Knight are still valid now: “many organizations such as the TU, which were once creative forces in the cultural life of the city, have withdrawn physically and psychologically. The university, by creating its own huge campus area on the outskirts and moving its facilities out of the city center, has become a separate entity isolated physically, socially and culturally. This bifurcation of the city has greatly weakened its cultural life. Local residents rarely visit the campus area other than to work.”<sup>1</sup> Since 1995, the campus has withdrawn even more, when the central library and the few university buildings were sold and moved into the campus. The university sport and cultural centers are located at the south end of the campus, opposite side of the city center, which is really hard to access from the inner city. What is more, the campus has no central gathering places and attractive meeting places outside the university buildings. Faculty buildings are isolated from each other, with spaces mainly for traffic in-between. The campus is a desolate area after office hours and during the weekends, with no reason for ordinary residents to visit this area.

## 5. Reflections on the design proposal

In response to the issues above, I would like to include a program of alumni –related functions and integrate it to the original function of the collection building we are going to design. This additional program (alumni center or

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<sup>1</sup> Knight, 1995, p.244

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alumni house) may cope with the problems in many ways:

The institution contributes to the balanced use by different groups of people, in order to achieve a sustainable development of a city. An alumni center offers the opportunities to invite graduates, current students, university staff, knowledge workers and researchers together by holding activities and events. Rather than just offering access to knowledge or personal education chances, the institution serves as a meeting point among users, where formal and informal social intercourse and cooperation, business negotiations take place. In addition, residential projects might also be included such as student housing.

To conclude, the initial idea of an alumni-related program might be practicable and do improve the situation of the city of Delft in many aspects.

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## **Part Three—Research Methods and Results**

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## 1. Introduction

After the literature study and user-group research basic on context mapping, I have the preliminary ideas about including a paratactic program of the alumni center of TU Delft next to the program of collections. There are several reasons why we need an alumni center here will be discussed later in the next section. The research questions to be looked into are mainly about how to construct the program of the alumni center in terms of people, spaces, services, facilities, atmospheres, and future visions.

The research methods include interview, observation, case study and comparison. By interviewing people working for the alumni service in the university, I got to know about the current situation of the alumni office in TU Delft in terms of their needs, opinions and preferences. Through a case study of another university's excellent model of alumni program, additional suggestions are given in the report.

## 2. Methods and findings

### 2.1 Findings based on the early literature study and user-group research—why the alumni center?

In this chapter, I will briefly discuss the findings and results from the previous research that motivate the initial idea of the alumni center, which is also strong supports of the feasibility and rationality of the plan.

Two main reasons are as follows:

- **User group similarity with collection building (1<sup>st</sup> report).**

The collection building discussed in the 1<sup>st</sup> report offers various range of user groups the access to the heritage collections preserved by TU Delft, together with the corresponding frontier research and their applications in the daily life. These three layers represent different layers of value, which meets the needs of different groups of users, providing diverse possibilities for interpretation, promoting the personal connection between the institution and the users. Moreover, the engagement of the institution in the urban environment provides a meeting point for local authorities, companies of mutual developments.

The target users of the collection building are:

1. Students.
2. Teaching and administrative staff.
3. Knowledge workers.
4. Local residents (non-university-related, including younger students before higher education).
5. Graduates.
6. Tourist (interested in the university).

Considering the function of an alumni center as a social and



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communication hub, it shares great similarity with the collection building in terms of the user groups, including particularly the university students, teaching and administrative staff, knowledge workers, and graduates, etc. Meanwhile, the collections provide special atmosphere and temperament to the institution, and sometimes they are the container of memories and the stimulus of a topic discussed among people.

In this sense, the nature of these two parametric programs match each other so could be joined together as a whole.

● **Delft's situation (Delft user group research and mapping- 2<sup>nd</sup> report).**

Another important consideration is the people's climate of the city of Delft, which is illustrated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> report.

Key factors are as follows:

1. Most graduates choose to leave.  
Delft is not the most favorable place for graduates. Instead, students take Amsterdam, Rotterdam and den Haag as their first preferable choices for working and living.
2. Knowledge workers live outside the inner city and seldom pay a visit.  
According to the mapping research, there are less amount of companies on the outskirts of the town, with a high density of knowledge workers. These workers are somehow invisible to the others in the city center, most of whom live on outskirts or in another city and commute to work using the highway. On the other hand, many creative and design-based firms and organization are in the city center but in really small-scale.
3. The city center is not especially lively and attractive for the young, artistic, and intellectuals. The amenity facilities need improvement.  
The restaurants and cafes in the city are particularly around the very center of the inner city, namely the market square, which are largely depend on tourism.
4. The university, by creating its own huge campus area on the outskirts and moving its facilities out of the city center, has become a separate entity isolated physically, socially and culturally.  
The last motivation is about to have a better connection between the university and the city. As the campus is a desolate area after office hours and during the weekends.

Basic on these findings, I would conclude on the mission of the alumni center:

- A reunion of the university and the city.
- Improves the catering and cultural amenities in the inner city.
- Brings people (graduates, knowledge workers...) back to the city center.

**2.2 Findings based on the interviews and observation—the current**

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## situation of alumni office.

The alumni office of TU Delft is loosely organized and somehow hard to access. Actually, people can hardly find a reception that you can walk-in and consult alumni-related issue. In order to check the feasibility of the alumni program, I got in touch with several divisions which are responsible for the alumni services and activities in different aspects. The findings and results recorded below are from three interviews and internet research (TU Delft alumni website).

### ● Alumni relations

#### 1. General information:

[Current location]

Building 21, Library

[Staff condition]

2 persons: Renske Vugts and Anouk Dijkstal (going to grow to 5 persons in the future)

Cooperate with other divisions in the university, such as career center and Valorisation Center.

Also work with some part-time staff from every faculty.

[Service]

-construct the alumni network worldwide

-keep alumni in touch with different ways

-organize alumni activities and provide services related to personal and career development, networking and knowledge

-receive supports from alumni including financial support and internship and job chances, etc.

[Current area]

1 office room in TU Delft central library.

#### 2. Interviewee

Anouk Dijkstal



### Anouk Dijkstal

Manager Alumni Relations at TU Delft

[The Hague Area, Netherlands](#) | Marketing and Advertising

Current TU Delft, Een land een samenleving, Hans Dijkstal Stichting

Previous Hans Dijkstal Stichting, BookYou, Zilveren Kruis Achmea

Education Nyenrode Business University

#### 3. Useful information/conclusion from the interview

[Working Location and Space of the office]

-Would like to have the office room inside of the campus to efficiently work with other cooperative divisions.

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-Looking for a house in the city center as the House of Alumni, dedicated to alumni activities. The house of Chalmers (figure. 1) is a good example they take, which was the private house of the previous professor and now serves as the alumni house of Chalmers University.



Figure 1 Chalmers University-the house of William Chalmers, credit to <http://www.chalmers.se/>

-Places they use for events now are those in Aula, the open space in the central library, the grand hall in Science Center, and the auditorium of Civil engineering, etc. They are expensive to rent, or sometimes fully occupied by other events. Feel inconvenient not to have a place of their own.

[Other requirements and expectations regarding the alumni house]

-Catering.

Different levels of catering serves are desirable, including drinks and snacks, cold dishes, simple meals, and high-level lunch/dinner, which could be all or partly provided by third-party suppliers (catering companies). Rooms for preparing food and drinks are necessary, also the rooms for dining for different groups. So the guests won't need to go to a restaurant somewhere else after the event/meeting.

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-Activity rooms.

The alumni house should be able to hold large events with participants up to a hundred, which are only several times a year. On the other hand, they would like to have smaller-scale events with more specific groups of people in the future, which require smaller rooms or flexible-in-scale rooms.

[Alumni and Activities]

-The alumni should be part of the university who are inside rather than outside of the university after graduation.

-Invite people back to lecture, activities, and events by emails, linked-in, website news and other ways.

-They are responsible for making friends with different parties, and creating exchange opportunities for them. The business/donation/... things are done by more specialized people.

- There are a lot of spontaneous and autonomous organizations among TU Delft alumni. Some of them form small communities based on a certain location, some of them are only based on online social media like LinkedIn, Facebook, WhatsApp and WeChat, etc. For instance, there is a small community based on Delft constituted of ca. 40 persons, who help each other and do things together. Some of my Chinese colleagues in BK faculty also established our own TUD-BK Chinese Alumni's organization on a social platform like WeChat. The office of Alumni Relations are curious about these official and unofficial organizations and would like to cooperate with them to form a stereo-network together.

● **TU Delft career center**

1. General information:

[Current location]

Jaffalaan 9a (permanent office) / Aula (walk-in hour)

[Staff condition]

8 persons (career counselor, study advisor, strategic communication, team assistant)

[Service]

-the vacancy wall in the information center

-Company Presentation: Talk& Toast

-Workshop / Training program for student

-Annual event

-Careers Counselling service

[Current area]

300 m<sup>2</sup> (150 m<sup>2</sup> x 2 floors)

10 m<sup>2</sup> (Aula booth)



Figure 2 Jaffalaan 9a-Office reception

## 2. Interviewee

Monique Draijer

Monique (the first one in the figure. 3) is designated careers counselor for the Graduate School. Her background is in Educational Psychology and on her career path she fulfilled several roles in recruitment, educational advice and counseling.

### The team



Monique Draijer



Mary Zuidervijk



Claire Visée



Bud Bickes



Margaret Welten



Aman Jindal



Yvonne van der Betting

Figure 3 the team

## 3. Useful information/conclusion from the interview

[Working Location and Space of the office]

- Happy to work in the inner city if the students are willing to go as well.
- Lack of working space. Once applied to move to Pulse<sup>1</sup>, which is a

<sup>1</sup> Pulse

Teaching spaces varying in size and design, new types of education like interactive seminars, a flipped classroom and video conferencing.

Houses food and beverage facilities featuring approximately 200 seats for relaxation and studying.

- 
- planned new education building in the campus, however get refused.
- Lack of activity space. Preferably the rooms in Aula, but often fully occupied. Use also Civil Engineering's hall.
  - Happy to have an alliance with other offices.
  - Serviced office might be feasible.



Figure 4 Design Scheme of Pulse, photo credit to <http://campusdevelopment.tudelft.nl/project/pulse/>

#### [Working and Living Place of the Graduates]

- Most students look for a job in Amsterdam. Rotterdam and den Haag is a preferable working place than Delft.
- Everyone loves to live in the inner city, but engineering students more practically choose to live on outskirts considering the rent, the future education of their kids and so on.
- Recently years have seen more international long-term settlers in the neighborhood of Delft.

#### [Alumni and Activities]

- The office do not invite alumni back, but the alumni themselves come back for different reasons: looking for a job/research/further education/business cooperation
- Counseling service are free for students, low-cost for graduates, depending on how long has it been since the graduation

### ● **SUPAIR jobs for young engineers**

1. General information
  - [Current location]  
Faculty of EWI, 20th floor.
  - [Staff condition]  
4 persons
  - [Service]



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-Forms a link between the young engineer and the business community  
(paid by the companies to look for suitable candidates for them)

-Help with Immigration and Naturalization Services

[Current area]

90 m<sup>2</sup>

-1 reception room+ 1 office+1 small meeting room

+shared spaces

2. Interviewee

Charlotte Coster

Human resources, SUPAIR jobs for young engineers.



3. Useful information/conclusion from the interview

[Working Location and Space of the office]

-Too remote to be known by students

-Enough working space.

-Happy to have an alliance with other offices.

[Working and Living Place of the Graduates]

-Most students come to ask for a job in Amsterdam.

In conclusion, these offices share some common characters and needs. Their jobs are all dealing with people, who are mainly current or graduated student, which means they want to be seen, known and easily accessed by them. Two of them mentioned about a lack of space considering current operation and future expansion.

According to their actual needs, the rooms that should be included in the plan includes:

Office rooms of their own;

Shared space:

Reception;

Multi-functional hall;

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Auditorium/assembly room/exhibition;  
Shared meeting room in different sizes;  
Kitchen;  
Coffee/bar.

### 2.3 Findings based on the case study and internet research—the things to learn from Division of Development and Alumni Relations of the University of Manchester.

## Alumni

At Manchester we're proud to have the largest global alumni community of any campus-based university in the UK, with many of the 330,000 graduates we are in contact with holding top positions in every imaginable field.

We're here to help alumni maintain a lifelong connection with us and with each other, sharing experiences and expertise and enjoying alumni-exclusive offers, events, networking and volunteering opportunities.



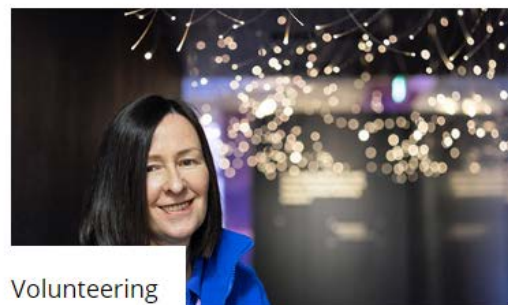
Cockcroft Rutherford Lecture 2016

Watch Danielle George, Professor of Radio Engineering, discuss the role of citizens in engineering projects.



Support Manchester

Your support helps our students and researchers and graduates to make a difference.



Volunteering

Help inspire the next generation of Manchester graduates.

Figure 5 the homepage of alumni website of the University of Manchester, photo credit to <http://www.manchester.ac.uk/connect/alumni/>

The alumni office of Manchester University is a good example recommend by Monique Draijer, the second interviewee from Career Center, TU Delft. At Manchester they have the largest global alumni community of any campus-based university in the UK, with many of the 330,000 graduates they are in contact with.



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Basically, their work is to help alumni maintain a lifelong connection with them and with each other, sharing experiences and expertise and enjoying alumni-exclusive offers, events, networking and volunteering opportunities:

- Keep alumni in touch

Magazines/Emails/Websites/Local Alumni Groups

- Events/Activities

Lectures/Reunions/Celebration of Philanthropy

- Get alumni involved

Donations/Volunteer/

Global Networks/General Assembly/

- Service

What interest me most are some events and service they provide.

Cockcroft Rutherford Lecture is the flagship event for alumni and friends of The University of Manchester, which usually takes place in June and to which all alumni are invited.

The alumni volunteering program is one of the largest across the globe, encouraging the alumni to benefit students and their own local communities. It could be a small effort to make with time and expertise, for instance, a meeting with the current students to influence and inspire the next generation, or efforts made to the local community in the name of the university. It conveys the idea that the university values every small effort, which I found is missing in delft from my perspective.

Another most important event during the year is the Celebration of Philanthropy. It's an event last for the whole day. It begins with behind-the-scenes tours of some of the University's most prized assets, including the Art Gallery, University Library, and Manchester Museum, all of which have benefitted significantly from donor support. We might learn from it, considering the collections takes more money to maintain the collection building with more accessibilities provided. The supports from the alumni could be part of the capital resource. And after the tour, donors are then invited to a showcase, which features a range of donor-funded projects. Donors chatted to staff and students to find out more about the impact of donations on campus, including insights into ground-breaking research being undertaken at the University. Then they join a conversation on stage with professor and student presenters. The day ends with a special ceremony and dinner in which some of the University's most significant donors are invited. So during the day, they meet different people and visit different spots on the campus and update their knowledge about the university.

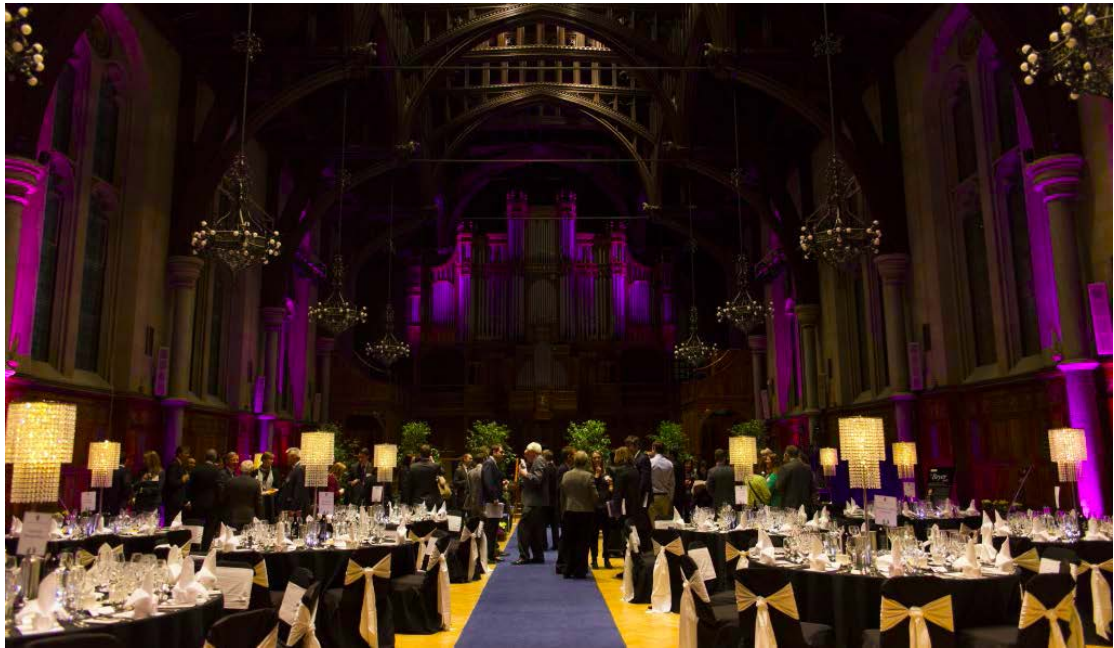


Figure 6 Celebration of Philanthropy, photo credit to <http://www.manchester.ac.uk/connect/alumni/>

The office also helps you to have a reunion event with old friends. The office will send an invitation to the group on your behalf. The event could also be advertised on social media and in their email newsletter.

- **Comparison**

The TU Delft's Alumni Office is from many aspects similar but in many other ways different.

Firstly, the website is not so adorable and welcoming. Activities related to the collections such as guided tour to chair collection in BK and university collection in Central Library, are difficult to find on the website.



Figure 7 Chair Collection in BK

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Secondly, we do also have a big annual event at TU Delft, like the Research Exhibition (detail introduced by Dingzhi Tang in his report) and the annual job market. However, they are still not representative enough to get wider attention and larger popularity. The Cockcroft Rutherford Lecture and the Celebration of Philanthropy are both good to take for references.



Figure 8 Research Exhibition in Central Library

Thirdly, the alumni activities are monotonous, half of which are alumni dinner/lunch in a certain city, and the rest are career/business related and faculty open day. Learning from the University of Manchester, we can also help the graduate to have a reunion with a smaller group of people as they wish instead of gathering graduates in a certain area without certain pertinence. Volunteering program might also good to be introduced, providing opportunities for the current student to meet their career model and get job chances.

### 3. Conclusion

At present, the alumni issues are not taken care of so well in TU Delft. The alumni should be regard as ambassadors, most of whom would leave Delft after graduation and become the representatives and speakers for the university. It is a critical way of construction and communication of the social image for TU Delft. In this way, it is more than important to keep the alumni update about the latest happenings and developments by inviting them back to lectures, exhibitions, conferences, and events. A nice alumni house is thus a necessary condition for further developments, which is still missing for the alumni offices.

Another argument is that the graduates themselves have already established a lot official/unofficial spontaneous organizations for their own sake. Some of them are based on real entity where they work together and help each other, while some of them are based on online social media. From my own experience of our TUD-BK Chinese Alumni's organization on the social platform, though we do not need a permanent office room for the core members, we do need a temporary meeting room and lecture room from time to time. In this

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sense, the alumni house can provide rooms for these organizations.

Now that the necessity and feasibility of the alumni program are confirmed, it is essential to link the findings to the design project, in another word, to relate the alumni to the collections.

Firstly, involving the alumni means that the collection building is not any more only a place for storing and exhibiting collections, but a place open to the general public where contents and people within are conceptually unified. One might walk in, and not have to have any connection with the 'function' of the building. The image of the building thus goes beyond a functional academic building, but rather a public communication and cultural center.

Secondly, the two parametric programs have to weave into each other. From the perspective of space design, the collections provide special atmosphere and temperament to the institution as decoration or furnish.

From the perspective of programming, the exhibitions/events of collections could be linked to the alumni activities, as naturally the objects are the container of memories and the stimulus of a topic discussed among people. More narrative could be thought of. For instance, every year the alumni vote to select one piece of the object as 'the object of the year'. And one alumnus/alumna will give an open lecture to explain their choice, the story behind, and present current/latest research in related fields (such as the story of the two theodolites delivered in the first report).

To conclude, the program of alumni and collections can be fit into each other in many ways and create mutual benefits.