

# Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences

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## Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners ([Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl](mailto:Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl)), Mentors and Delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before P2 at the latest.

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

<b>Personal information</b>	
Name	Amanda van den Burg
Student number	4450019

  

<b>Studio</b>		
Name / Theme	Architectural design crossovers Heterogeneous city - London	
Main mentor	Joran Kuijper	Theory and territories
Second mentor	Florian Eckhardt	Building technology
Argumentation of choice of the studio	<p>My interest is in the political, economical and social aspects which constitute a complexity in the built environment. I have previously done research on the reason why living in cities is becoming more and more unattainable. This research focussed mostly on the economical and political causes of the urban crisis and looked at the tools available to governments for solving this problem. I would like to use this research to add the social aspect to that and focus on tools that other actors, like architects and urban planners have for solving the current crisis in cities.</p> <p>My motivation for choosing this graduation studio is the multidisciplinary approach to designing which allows appreciation for the complexity in the built environment. This studio allows me to dive into other disciplines, and therefore is a good fit for my interests and research theme.</p>	

  

<b>Graduation project</b>	
Title of the graduation project	Making living in cities attainable again Creating a community based approach to improve the social balance in a neighbourhood
<b>Goal</b>	

Location:	De Beauvoir ward, Hackney, London
The posed problem,	<p>The general problem is that the urban clustering that drives innovation and economic growth — the clustering of industry, economic activity, and talented and ambitious people in cities — also carves deep divides in our cities and our society, resulting in rising housing prices, more inequality, economic and racial segregation and entrenched poverty.</p> <p>The specific problem is that the social imbalance that has emerged as a consequence of the aforementioned contradiction of urban clustering, is resulting in complete communities not just being left behind in the economic growth, but also in access to the city and opportunities for participating in society.</p>
research questions and	<p>What does the social imbalance in London look like and how can we create opportunities for those communities that are now being left behind?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Which communities are being left behind in the economic growth?</li> <li>2. What are the possible ways for creating upward mobility, and what are the pros and cons of those?</li> <li>3. How can architecture attribute to the solution?</li> </ol>
design assignment in which these result.	

The research concludes that there are multiple ways for creating upward mobility, both bottom-up and top-down. The research focusses mostly on the possibilities of bottom-up solutions. Eric Kleinenberg's theory about the importance of social infrastructure plays a central role, substantiated by an existing British clothing label, Community Clothing, that aims to "create and sustain quality jobs in towns that were once alive with clothing-manufacturing activity" and "to restore civic pride in communities and consumers".

Therefore the design assignment in which the research results is a clothing label which does its manufacturing in-house in order to create sustainable jobs in the area. Additionally, the label will have as one of its main goals to build a community, among others through providing opportunities for education.

Hackney is one of the most deprived areas, not just in London but in the whole of England. Therefore, this is the right location to start building such a community. The location, a former factory in the De Beauvoir ward, offers the space needed for the manufacturing of clothing.

The clothing label and the social infrastructure that it will create, will result in opportunities for those communities that are now being left behind by economic growth.

## **Process**

### **Method description**

The methods used for the research are a literature review, demographic analysis and a case study.

The methods used for designing will be a literature review and historical research. The used techniques will mostly be drawing and sketching.

## **Literature and general practical preference**

For the research:

In order to gain a better insight into the processes that led to the social crisis in our cities today and what the consequences of the crisis are, a few theories were consulted. The New Urban Crisis by Richard Florida, for a better understanding of the complexity of the urban crisis. This book gives a more generic view on the problems. Palaces For The People by Eric Klinenberg, gives an insight into the importance of social infrastructure and provide ideas concerning possible bottom-up solutions. Lastly, Capital City by Samuel Stein helps to understand the role of urban planners in the proces of urban renewal.

Furthermore, in order to give the best possible overview of which communities are being left behind, the most important data used in this research are the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's indices of deprivation.

Lastly, the aforementioned clothing label Community Clothing will serve as a case study.

For the design:

The literature review will mostly be used to gain insight into what a clothing label will need in terms of programme and space. The historical research will go into the architecture of the building, since it is a factory that was built in 1913. This part of the research will go into the state of the structure, the type of structure, a value assessment of the architecture, my position in regards to architectural interventions, etc.

## **Reflection**

**1. What is the relation between your graduation (project) topic, the studio topic (if applicable), your master track (A,U,BT,LA,MBE), and your master programme (MSc AUBS)?**

I don't like looking at things in a singular way. Nothing ever stands on its own. The circumstances of disadvantaged communities cannot be helped by only addressing the housing crisis, or by only creating more jobs, or by only building libraries in order to create a social infrastructure. The problems are complex, consisting of economical, political and social aspects.

I certainly don't claim that the proposed design assignment will solve all problems, but I believe in creating places and opportunities where people can start building their own future. The clothing label will not only provide work, but also possibilities for education. Aside from these two very important functions, there will be other ways in which the label will help in building a social infrastructure.

The studio's theme - heterogeneous city - describes a city that doesn't have a coherent image. It implies that a city consists of layers and fragments. "It [...] calls for reflection on the various roles that architecture can possibly fulfil in relation to challenges stemming out of other realms of investigation." This look on the city fits well with my way of always aiming to see the bigger story and the complexity of things. Always looking for the place where different fields of research collide.

My aim is to design a building that will be part of the solution to the problems that can be found in the other realms of investigation, specifically the economic and social circumstances of certain communities.

Although the research focusses mostly on economics and sociology, which might be a better fit with the Management in the built environment track, the final design will be an architectural assignment, namely the redesign of an existing factory. Furthermore, the idea is to use architectural tools to help build the social infrastructure that is needed to help these disadvantaged communities.

Therefore, I would argue that this research project is a good fit within both the architecture track and the Master programme.

**2. What is the relevance of your graduation work in the larger social, professional and scientific framework.**

There has been a lot of attention for gentrification and its effects on the housing prices in big cities such as London, New York and Amsterdam. There are however many other problems that these cities face: growing inequality; polarisation; segregation; and distrust, and the disappearance of a sense of community and of civic pride. Left unattended, these problems could eventually lead to the disruption of our democratic society. Despite the severity of the situation, these problems are talked and written about much less than gentrification and the housing crisis. The literature that does address these problems focusses either only on the financial, or the political, or the social aspects. The solution, however, lies in the middle of these disciplines. Therefore, the aim of this graduation project is to jump into that void and find a solution for upward mobility that is more substantial than just creating a community, pays more attention to the human aspect of the story than simple looking at the economics of the problem, and is faster than politics.

