



Delft University of Technology

Campus of the future

Managing a matter of solid, liquid and gas

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Publication date

2021

Document Version

Other version

Citation (APA)

den Heijer, A. C. (2021). *Campus of the future: Managing a matter of solid, liquid and gas*. TU Delft, Architecture, Management in the Built Environment.

Important note

To cite this publication, please use the final published version (if applicable). Please check the document version above.

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Campus of the future

Managing a matter
of solid, liquid and gas

by



Alexandra den Heijer



“dedicated to whom I cherish and met on campus”

This book is based on
the inaugural address entitled “Campus matters”,
given by prof. dr. ir. Alexandra C. den Heijer
at the occasion of her installation on Wednesday November 13, 2019,
following the resolution of the Executive Board
to appoint her as professor of Public Real Estate,
within the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment
at Delft University of Technology (TU Delft)

December 2021



Preface

matter

noun

1 [mass noun] physical substance in general, as distinct from mind and spirit; (in physics) that which occupies space and possesses rest mass, especially as distinct from energy: the structure and properties of matter.

2 a subject or situation under consideration: a great deal of work was done on this matter | financial matters.

verb [no object]

1 [usually with negative or in questions] be important or significant

source: Oxford Dictionary of English, Stevenson (2010)

In an academic career, the opportunity to publish a personal vision and agenda in a book is rare, even though it is often expressed on stage for students, colleagues and decision makers in practice. My inaugural address, as professor of Public Real Estate, provided such an occasion. With my speech “Campus matters” as a basis, I took the liberty to write this book in the first person (I, me, my) or the collective first person (we, us, our) when I describe findings or projects of the Campus Research Team.

For decades, the campus has been my object of study and my home base at the same time. Describing past, present and future has an academic basis and a personal touch. And while I was about to publish this book, the corona reality changed the physical campus into a virtual one, world-wide. Ironically, many concluded that “the campus mattered”, because it was missed more than ever. Observing from the inside how that affected the university community and scheduling an extra round of interviews with campus managers of all Dutch universities, enriched but did not change the message of the inaugural speech.

At the beginning of the 21st century many thought that bricks would be replaced by clicks on campus. However, the universities’ campus managers had a different story to tell. Indeed, there were more clicks to facilitate, but not to replace the bricks. The virtual campus would emerge, but the physical campus would stay. With increasing pressure on environmental and financial resources, strategic choices need to be made to preserve the university’s heritage and legacy, to accommodate the network organisations that universities have become and to support the mobile community that needs a home base to return to.

The campus of the future is a combination of solid, liquid and gas. This metaphor from physics refers to three states of matter, resembling the traditional, network and virtual university. This is not the only reference to natural sciences and technology in this book, which shows that I am equally fond of words, images, figures and equations. My approach to campus management, connecting many scientific disciplines, also reflects my broad interest in academia.

This book aims at reaching different kinds of stakeholders – policy makers, users, controllers, engineers, designers and other decision makers – by speaking their language and engaging them all in collectively shaping the campus of the future. I hope this book is not only interesting for campus decision makers, but for all who own, manage or use public real estate.

Alexandra den Heijer

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