

TEACHING-DESIGN-RESEARCH: Research Integration and the Landscape Architecture Education at UCPH

Project group:

Tenure-track Assistant Professor Anne Margrethe Wagner, Associate Professor Torben Dam, Professor & Head of Studies, Landscape Architecture (MSc) Anne Tietjen and Senior Research Consultant & Head of Studies, Landscape Architecture (BSc) Jan Støvring, all from Landscape Architecture and Planning, IGN, SCIENCE.

Education

Landscape Architecture

Study Board

Studienævn for Geovidenskaber og Planlægning

Description of activities

Background and aim

The landscape architecture programme trains students in the critical analysis, design and planning of built environments and landscapes with an emphasis on sustainability, democracy, and quality of life for more than humans. Landscape design and planning address urgent societal problems such as climate change, the biodiversity crisis, and just green transitions. This requires using and synthesizing specialist knowledge from many fields: the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities. We create teaching-learning settings where the students can put such knowledge into play within landscape architecture projects. Yet landscape design and planning research also constitutes a knowledge field in its own right that produces knowledge on, about and – importantly – through design(ing). Integrating design research with education is therefore crucial for further developing research-based education in the landscape architecture programme.

We chose to use the opportunity within the strategic focus on integration of research and teaching at UCPH, to 1) Initiate a collective discussion and reflection and inventory among teachers in the Landscape Architecture programme on how we already work with integration of research in the design-based teaching, specifically targeting the unique teaching-design-research nexus in the landscape architecture education and 2) explore how we can be more aware of these relations, communicate them collectively and develop them even further. In addition, we carried out a pilot project in the BSc course Planter og teknologi i landskabsarkitektur 1 (Plants and technology in landscape architecture 1).

Program and activities

1. Seminar and workshop series:

Part 1/

Public lecture: [Research through Design in Landscape Architecture](#) with Professor Sanda Lenzholzer, Wageningen University

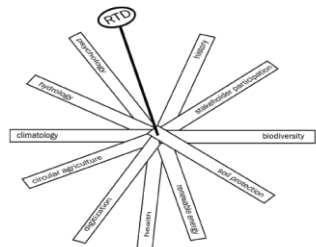
One-day seminar and workshop for educators on the Landscape Architecture programme, including examples from nine course presentations, mapping exercises and a collaborative writing workshop.

The day was facilitated by the working group and the invited international expert Sanda Lenzholzer, and supported by Marie Larsen Ryberg, researcher on the UCPH research integration project and associate professor Svava Riesto (writing workshop: The Joy of Writing’).

Focus: What do we already do? The nexus of research-design-teaching as a point of departure for research integration in the landscape architecture education

Outcomes included positionings in relation to design research, education-based research, student-teacher relations in design-based teaching, ethical considerations, knowledge fields and the advantage of design as a synthesizing discipline. (25 participants)

SANDA LENZHOLZER
 Research through Design
 in Landscape Architecture



April 20th 2023, hours 16.00-17.30
 UCPH-IGN, Røllighedsvej 23, Frederiksberg C
 Auditorium 'Landskab'

What relations between *designing* and *researching* are useful and perhaps necessary to consider when framing our actions and discourses today? The relationship between design and science has been debated in practice and academia throughout decades and in particular the notion of Research through Design (RTD) has caught attention as a respected research method. In this lecture, Sanda Lenzholzer will elaborate on the use of RTD techniques and associated methods such as Research on design and Research for design. Based on an actualized discussion of these approaches, Sanda Lenzholzer will share her work with these methodological concepts and questions and their implications for landscape architecture practice and education. The lecture is part of targeted initiative concerning research integration at the landscape architecture education at UCPH, focusing on research-design-education dynamics.

Sanda Lenzholzer is Full Professor at Wageningen University, Visiting professor at Politecnico di Milano and Principal Investigator at Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Metropolitan Solutions (AIMS). She studied Landscape Architecture in Germany and Urbanism in the UK. Subsequently she worked as a designer in practice in the Netherlands and Germany. In 2004 she returned to academia, to Wageningen University, and has specialized in climate-oriented design and the relationship between research and design. She contributes to improving the knowledge basis of climate-responsive urban and landscape design. Furthermore she conducted extensive studies into the methodology of Research through Design, especially in landscape architecture.

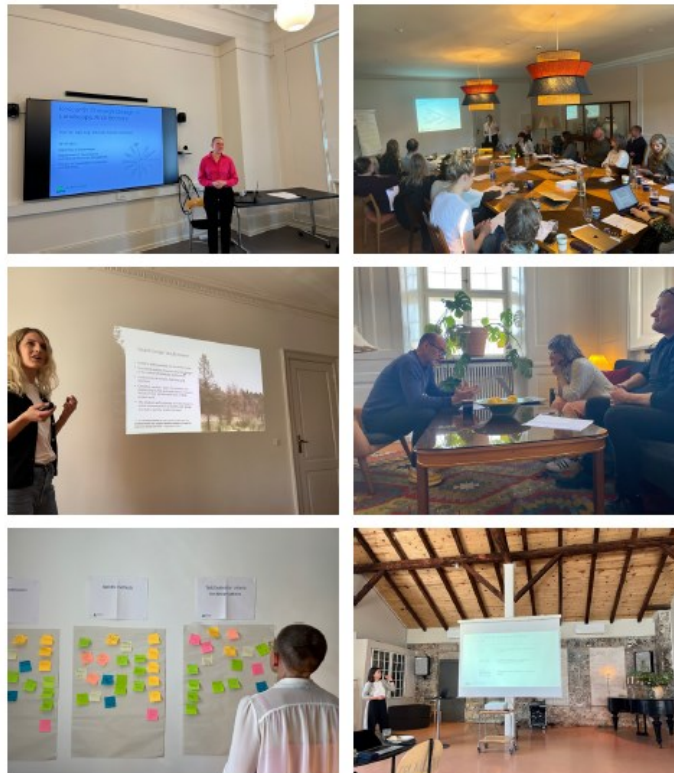


Figure 1: Poster for public lecture on 'Research Through Design' and images from seminar/workshop 1 and 2

Part 2/

Half-day seminar and workshop for educators on the Landscape Architecture programme, including summary from Seminar/workshop I and a second collaborative writing workshop. The half day was facilitated by the working group and supported by associate professor Svava Riesto.

Focus: Identifying positional and thematic clusters concerning the teaching-design-research relation

Outcomes: Examples of topics that emerged in relation to research integration and the landscape architecture education were mediations, epistemes, the relation between social science and design methods, students' understandings of research, the strong collaboration with practice and interdisciplinarity. (20 participants)

The presentations, mappings and writing exercises from the two seminars/workshops form the basis for a collective positioning paper, currently in preparation for publication. The aim of this paper is to examine and question how we are currently working with research integration in the landscape architecture programme by formulating relevant themes and position(s) for how research integration can contribute to further developing a high-quality research-based landscape architecture education.

Outcome of the workshops

The presentations and workshops supported a needed discussion of relationships between research, design, and education in the landscape architecture programme. Specifically, we set focus on how to differentiate research-based education – such as the integration of specialist knowledge in the design and planning of landscape architecture projects – from design research integration into landscape architecture education, where students actively contribute to knowledge production through designing.

2. Pilot project on BSc course Planter og teknologi i landskabsarkitektur 1:

One day reading, discussion- and design workshop based on a preliminary landscape design project at Hvidovre Harbour. Written students' reflections on their expectations and on the outcome of the final landscape architectural project, reveal when and how natural science and design research impact the design process.



Ulrikke: De 'plug n' play' biodiversitetsprincipper vi har i dag, er ikke nok. Dødt ved, enårige blomsterblandinger og uslået græs rækker ikke til en krise af den størrelse vi står lige foran og midt i.

Peter: Jeg tror ikke vi kommer langt med dårlig samvittighed og små mål. Vi skal være ambitiøse og have nogle større mål, og de skal findes ved hjælp af forskning og nogle visionære politikere. Forskere fordi vores mål er nødt til at have noget bag sig. Vi har ikke tid til at gætte alt for meget, hvis det skal nå at gøre en forskel.

Katrine: Når man er mere inde bagom forskningen og processen og tanker, gør det lettere for en selv at spekulere over andre emner

Figure 2: Workshop, reading and discussions of research and design precedents in small groups and project design reflections on the workshop's four subjects. The quotes are students' initial reflections in the beginning of the workshop

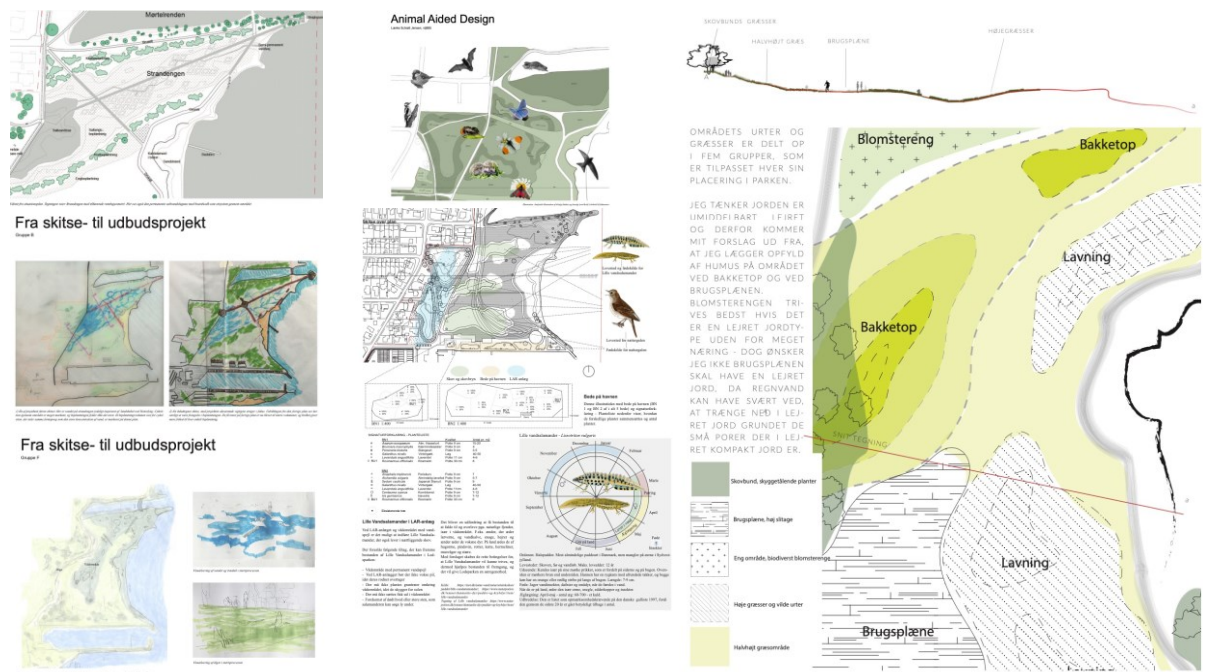


Figure 3: Examples of the final outcomes of students' landscape design projects and preliminary design stages. One workshop input (animal aided design) developed during the design phase.

Adapting of the activities

We had applied for 300.000 DKK to develop research integration in the landscape architecture programme with a focus on the 1st and 3rd year BSc programme as well as MSc thesis projects. However, we received 100.000 DKK and therefore had to adapt the planned activities to this new budget. The 3rd year BSc programme activity was carried out as planned (Pilot Planter og Teknologi). Instead of the 1st year and MSc thesis activities we conducted the described workshops with the entire teaching staff in the BSc and MSc programs in landscape architecture.

Experienced challenges

Our collegium reflects various knowledge fields (design research, natural sciences, social sciences, humanities) that contribute to and shape our education. Not all teachers work with design research or are trained in the core expertise of design and planning in landscape architecture. A concern was therefore how to include all teachers in this initiative focused on research integration in the teaching-design-research nexus.

Most important learnings

Through the workshop/seminar-series, teachers/researchers have been brought together for discussions about the teaching-design-research nexus, which we would not otherwise have had. The discussions have revealed different perspectives and viewpoints concerning the relationship between teaching, design and research integration, including the importance of design(ing) in teaching and as a research method. The UCPH research integration model as well as concepts/perspectives presented by Sanda Lenzholzer and Marie Ryberg stimulated the discussion further. A specific learning point is the importance of balancing between inclusion of teaching staff and still having a specific academic focus to explore.

Especially in the context of the university setting, the design-based approaches and their engagement with other fields are underrepresented in concepts and strategies. We found that exploring, mapping and defining these relations will not only sustain a critical pedagogical ethos, but also support the agency of design professions in collaborative and interdisciplinary setups in general.

Integration in the education

As an outcome of this project the Curriculum for the BSc Programme in Landscape Architecture has been updated (Fall 2023): The competence profile now includes a more thorough description of relations between research and design, based on concepts presented and discussions taking place during the workshops.

Other study programs are likely to benefit from curating a similar program of expert input and workshops for collectively discussing and developing their specific take on and context of research integration.

For more info:

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