

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Graduation Plan: All tracks

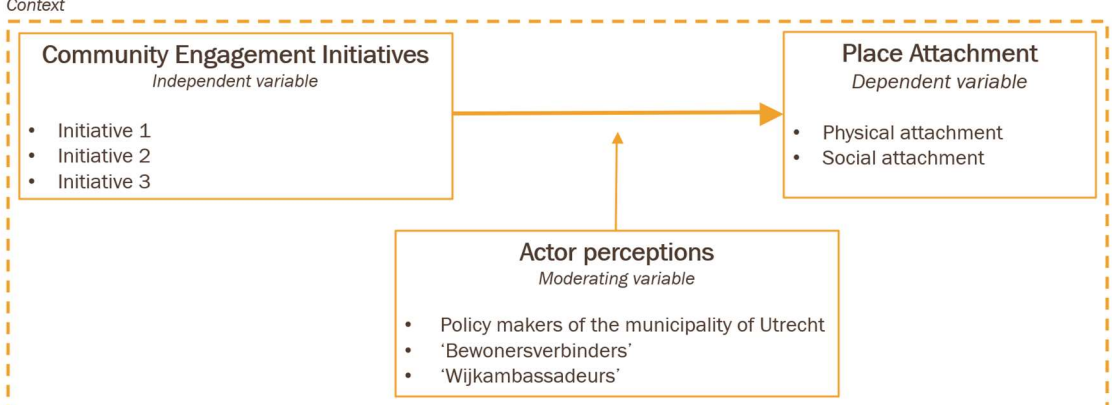
Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners (Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl), Mentors and Delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before P2 at the latest.

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

Personal information	
Name	Lyonne van der Vegte
Student number	4827384

Studio		
Name / Theme	Management in the Built Environment – Tackling Housing Inequality	
Main mentor	Gerard van Bortel	Real Estate Management
Second mentor	Marietta Haffner	Urban Development Management
Argumentation of choice of the studio	Choosing 'Tackling Housing inequality' as a theme for my graduation, has several reasons. First, I have always been interested in the social aspects of my studies. This theme focuses on an issue with profound social implications. Researching this theme contributes to the well-being of individuals and communities and I have an opportunity to positively impact people's lives. Secondly, Tackling housing inequality asks for a research engaging with multiple disciplines, such as urban planning and sociology, combining both theory with the daily practice. Choosing this theme allows for an interdisciplinary approach, offering a holistic understanding of the complex factors.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Community engagement initiatives to enhance place attachment: exploring strategies of Dutch municipalities focused on community engagement initiatives, intending to enhance place attachment among residents of disadvantaged neighbourhoods
Goal	
Case location:	Overvecht – Municipality of Utrecht
Research problem	The problem statement of this research is that the place attachment among residents of deprived neighbourhoods is very low (39.6% does not feel socially or physically attached to the neighbourhood). The literature review states that community engagement initiatives contribute to a stronger place attachment, by involving residents in decision-making processes and stimulating social interaction. In the past few years several initiatives have been implemented, focusing on increasing community engagement among residents of deprived neighbourhoods. It is not known what the best practices and barriers in the implementation of these initiatives are, which can be useful information for future projects in other deprived neighbourhoods. The goal is to learn lessons from practice; the strategies implemented by municipalities focused on community engagement initiatives, intending to enhance the place attachment among residents of disadvantaged neighbourhoods by looking at best practices and challenges both in literature and in a case study.
Research question &	Main research question: What lessons can be learned from the strategies implemented by municipalities focused on community engagement initiatives,

sub questions	intending to enhance the place attachment among residents of disadvantaged neighbourhoods? Research sub questions: 1. What are the definitions of place attachment and community engagement activities and how are they related? 2. What are the key objectives set by municipalities focused on community engagement activities in disadvantaged neighbourhoods? 3. What are the best practices implemented by municipalities focused on community engagement activities in disadvantaged neighbourhoods? 4. What barriers have municipalities encountered when focusing on community engagement activities in disadvantaged neighbourhoods? 5. How have municipalities tried to overcome barriers when focusing on community engagement activities in disadvantaged neighbourhoods? Residents of disadvantaged neighbourhoods Context  <pre> graph LR subgraph Context A["Community Engagement Initiatives <i>Independent variable</i> • Initiative 1 • Initiative 2 • Initiative 3"] B["Place Attachment <i>Dependent variable</i> • Physical attachment • Social attachment"] C["Actor perceptions <i>Moderating variable</i> • Policy makers of the municipality of Utrecht • 'Bewonersverbinders' • 'Wijkambassadeurs'"] A --> B C --> A end </pre>
design assignment in which these result.	This research builds upon the insights gathered from the research investigating the important role of community engagement initiatives on enhancing place attachment in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. With a central objective to translate these findings into actionable recommendations, the assignment is aimed at establishing innovative and effective interventions. In the lessons distilled from municipalities, such as the case study of "Samen voor Overvecht" in Utrecht, the aim is to generate tangible, context-specific recommendations for future projects, which will enhance place attachment among residents in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The research output seeks to provide municipalities with useful recommendations, grounded in both theoretical insights and the lessons learned from the case study, fostering the creation of more vibrant, connected, and resilient communities, where everyone can feel at home.

Process

Method description

1. Desk research: Literature review

The first phase of this research is the desk research, containing mostly literature review about the main concepts of the research topic. This literature review entails an extensive analysis of relevant literature from various sources about the background of this research, the definition and importance of place attachment, the role of community engagement initiatives and the role of the municipality in improving disadvantaged neighbourhoods. This will be done by assessing both academic literature, as well as policy documents from the Dutch government and municipalities. The literature review serves as a foundational step to establish context and build upon existing knowledge.

2. Empirical research: Case analysis & semi-structured interviews

The research involves an **in-depth case study analysis** of a disadvantaged neighbourhood in the Netherlands. The case studies aim to inspect the effects of various initiatives focusing on the community engagement of residents and the effects on their place attachment. The goal is to offer a nuanced understanding of the specific strategies that are tried out or implemented in the area. The purpose of the case analysis is to connect the academic knowledge that has been gathered in the previous phase to the real world.

Then, the **interviews** will take place. Three types of interviewees will be selected, based on their roles within the policy-making process:

1. *Policy makers from the municipality;*
2. *Resident connectors* ('bewonersverbinders': the eyes and ears of the neighbourhood, freelance working for the municipality, but also residents of the neighbourhood, who focus on connecting the residents to each other and to the municipality);
3. *Neighbourhood ambassadors* ('wijkambassadeurs': residents from the neighbourhood who are willing to help the municipality with making/implementing policies).

The purpose of the selection of these three types of interviewees is to gather a clear understanding of the effects of community engagement initiatives on the different scale levels, from policy makers to residents from the neighbourhood itself.

The interviews will focus on gaining a deeper understanding of the following subjects:

- The role / connection of the interviewee to this neighbourhood;
- The vision of the interviewee on community engagement initiatives and increasing place attachment in disadvantaged neighbourhoods;
- The vision of the interviewee on successful initiatives focused on community engagement in their neighbourhood;
 - Goal of this initiative;
 - Why the initiative was implemented like that;
 - Why they were successful;
 - Lessons: How the interviewee would (advise the municipality to) do it differently next time;
- The vision of the interviewee on unsuccessful initiatives focused on community engagement in their neighbourhood;
 - Goal of this initiative;
 - Why the initiative was implemented like that;
 - Why they were unsuccessful;
 - Lessons: How the interviewee would (advise the municipality to) do it differently next time;
- The vision of the interviewee on what other advises they have for the municipality to increase the community engagement in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

By interviewing these interviewees, three perspectives on the topic of community engagement initiatives in disadvantaged neighbourhoods are given, which will contribute to a full understanding of the lessons learned from this case study.

3. Synthesis: Coding & analysing

After the interviews, the recordings will be transcribed. Then, the next step is to code and analyse the transcripts of the nine interviews. This will be done by using ATLAS TI. Both deductive and inductive approaches will be used in coding the interviews. After the coding process, the transcripts will be exported from Atlas.TI to be able to view what has been covered in the interviews by theme

and code. Then, co-occurrence tables will be generated from the results to further analyse whether any interesting relationships emerged.

Literature and general practical references

Brown, B., Perkins, D. D., & Brown, G. (2003). Place attachment in a revitalizing neighbourhood: Individual and block levels of analysis. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 23, 259-271. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0272-4944\(02\)00117-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0272-4944(02)00117-2)

Daverveld, S. (2006) *Thuis voelen in de sociale mix van geherstructureerde voormalige achterstandsbuurtten*. De heterogene wijk, voor iedereen een thuisbasis? Doctoraalscriptie sociologie over de achtergronden van thuis voelen in Amsterdam Nieuw West. Amsterdam.

Graaf, P. van der & Duyvendak, J.W. (2009) Thuisvoelen in stedelijke vernieuwing. Buurthechting in Nederlandse achterstandswijken. *Sociologie* 5, 261-276

Graaf, P. van der (2009) *Out of Place? Emotional Ties to the Neighbourhood in Urban Renewal in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom*. Amsterdam: uap.

Graaf, P. van der en J.W. Duyvendak (2004) *De koersresultaten van Emmen Revisited: 5 jaar integrale herstructurering*. Emmen: Emmen Revisited.

Hidalgo, M. en B. Hernandez (2001) Place attachment: conceptual and empirical questions. *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 21, 273-281.

Livingston, M., Bailey, N., & Kearns, A. (2010). Neighbourhood attachment in deprived areas: evidence from the North of England. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 25(4), 409–427. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10901-010-9196-3>

Manzo, L. C., & Perkins, D. D. (2006). Finding common ground: The importance of place attachment to community participation and planning. *Journal of Planning Literature*, 20(4), 335-350. DOI: 10.1177/0885412205286160

Riger, S. en P. Lavrakas (1981) Community Ties: Patterns of Attachment and Social Interaction in Urban Neighbourhoods. *American Journal of Community Psychology* 9, 55-66.

Scannell, L., & Gifford, R. (2010). Defining place attachment: a tripartite organizing framework. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 30(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2009.09.006>

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)?

This thesis directly contributes to **Theme 6: 'Tackling Housing Inequality'** by addressing the social aspects of housing in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. It explores strategies to enhance place attachment, which is crucial for creating more inclusive and sustainable communities. Tackling housing inequality involves not only providing physical housing but also fostering a sense of belonging and attachment within communities.

The master track **Management in the Built Environment** emphasizes the skills and knowledge required for effective management in urban development. This research about community engagement initiatives contributes directly to this track by exploring strategies

implemented by municipalities. It delves into the managerial aspects of fostering place attachment and community engagement, aligning with the core principles of the master track.

This thesis aligns with the multidisciplinary nature of the **MSc AUBS program**. It combines elements of both urbanism and management in addressing the complex challenges of disadvantaged neighbourhoods. By investigating community engagement strategies, this research bridges the gap between the physical built environment and the social dynamics, which is in line with the integrated approach encouraged in this master program.

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

Social relevance: This research is very socially relevant by directly addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by residents in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Investigating community engagement initiatives to enhance place attachment contributes insights aimed at breaking negative cycles and improving overall well-being. The study's emphasis on fostering stronger community bonds aligns with broader societal goals of promoting social inclusion. As residents develop stronger attachments to their neighbourhoods, the potential for improved social support networks, and shared community resources increases, fostering a sense of belonging and social cohesion. Additionally, the research contributes to urban resilience by empowering communities to collectively address evolving challenges.

Professional relevance: For professionals engaged in community development and policymaking, this research offers valuable insights for informed decision-making. By understanding best practices and potential barriers in implementing community engagement initiatives, municipalities, policy makers, and community development professionals can refine existing strategies or design new, effective initiatives. Policymakers can benefit from the research's emphasis on the role of municipalities in the National Liveability and Safety Program, guiding policy decisions to improve liveability and safety in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Community development professionals, including policy makers from the municipality, can use the research findings to play more effective roles in connecting residents, implementing policies, and fostering positive change at the community level.

Scientific relevance: From a scientific viewpoint, this research contributes significantly to the field of urban studies. By exploring the dynamics of place attachment and community engagement in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, the study advances the academic understanding of urban environments and social dynamics. The interdisciplinary nature of the research, drawing from sociology, urban planning, and policy studies, adds depth to ongoing academic discussions. The meticulous research methodology, including a comprehensive literature review, detailed case study, and rigorous data analysis, ensures scientific accuracy. Qualitative methods, such as interviews and case analysis, enrich the exploration of community engagement initiatives and their impact on place attachment. The comparative analysis between literature findings and the Utrecht case study further enhances the scientific value of the research.