

# 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](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:

Personal information	
Name	N. Meijer
Student number	
Telephone number	
Private e-mail address	

Studio		
Name / Theme	Explorelab	
Main mentor	Leontine de Wit	Architecture (design tutor)
Second mentor	Herman van Bergeijk	Architectural History (research tutor)
Argumentation of choice of the studio	The possibility of creating your own assignment based on a personal fascination or topic of interest.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	‘Skatescape’: a public space catalyst for social interaction
Goal	
Location:	Delft, ‘Schieoevers Noord’
The posed problem,	<p>How to design a skatepark along the ‘Schieoevers’ for the local skate community and any other city user in Delft?</p> <p>The local skateboard community has no satisfactory place in Delft to practice their activity. The only two official skate spots are very outdated, badly maintained and not suited to all weather conditions. The location of skatepark ‘de Middenberm’, situated at an intersection between busy roads, fails to facilitate interactions between skateboarders and other city users.</p> <p>As a consequence, skateboarders are dependent on cities outside Delft that do offer the desired facilities. This causes skaters from Delft to lose sight of each other. Lots of skaters also seem to go more often to informal spots like parking lots, public squares, parking garages and schoolyards, where they are most likely not welcome.</p> <p>Moreover, there is a general misunderstanding of skateboarders by non-skaters (including governing bodies) as being rude, vandalistic, antisocial, etc. – whilst on the contrary it is a very social community, consisting of highly creative people, having a positive impact worldwide. (For instance a lot of so-called outcasts/ misfits/ outsiders feel easily welcomed into this community.)</p>

	<p>The municipality of Delft seems not to be aware of the urgency/ need for a place for skateboarders in Delft while having received several requests over the last couple of years. They tend not to see the positive impact this community has on a social, creative and educative level.</p> <p>Meanwhile, the municipality of Delft is working on future development plans for the industrial area ‘Schieoevers’ (Dutch name for the riverbanks along the ‘Schie’). In the Northern part of this location they have planned, in cooperation with urban developers, to combine the functions of working, living and recreating.</p> <p>The development plan for ‘Schieoevers Noord’ (June 2019) provides the framework for a step-by-step area transformation over the course of 10 to 20 to 30 years. Not all of its content has yet been determined and thus it is still open for any substantive suggestion or adjustment. In my opinion one of the poorly thought-out concepts in this development plan is the way they separated the site into three areas: ‘ruis, reuring en rust’ which can be translated as ‘noise, commotion and tranquility’. A question in this division is why they put the central line where ‘commotion’ happens across factory buildings, but not along the water? The tranquility part is situated at both sides along the Schieoevers, where only dwelling is implemented to create tranquility. However, I think the quality of the water, in this case the ‘Schie’ waterway, is greatly underestimated. The quality of being situated along the water in this area can be translated into future environmental, spatial and social advantages.</p> <p>Eventually these problems have given rise to the question stated above: How to design a skatepark along the ‘Schieoevers’ for the local skate community and any other city user in Delft?</p>
<p>research questions and</p>	<p>What is architecturally needed to practice skateboarding? How are skateboarders connected to public space and architecture? Who is part of the skateboard community and what do they do? What is the (basic) typology of a skatepark? What kind of architectural elements are needed to design a place to stimulate encounters between skaters and other city users? How to combine a skatepark with public space along the Schieoevers? This leads to the following research question:</p> <p><b>How could the architecture of a ‘skatepark’ contribute to an added value or more interesting public environment along the ‘Schieoevers’ in Delft? (1+1=3)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Definition ‘skatepark’: an area designated and equipped for skateboarding in the form and/or combination of a street/ hall/ court/ urban landscape/ bowl/ objects which also functions as a public space for other city users.</li> <li>- What is meant by ‘more interesting’ in this case; evoking social engagement/ encounters/ gatherings and stimulating various activities.</li> </ul>

design  
assignment in  
which these  
result.

The design assignment would be:  
Which elements are necessary to design a 'skatepark +' being a catalyst for the  
'new' public environment of Delft 'Schieoever'?

**Catalyst** in the sense that it:

- Has more to offer than being just a skatepark
- Stimulates encounters between skaters and/or other city users
- Stimulates various activities
- Inspires and educates (to create/ be creative)
- Stimulates social engagement
- Is a healthy and attractive public space

## Process

### Method description

Research → practical framework → Design

The design assignment will be based on a practical framework distilled from the research.

The ways of doing research will be on the one hand done by **deriving information from literature** on skateboarding and/ or public space and architecture and on the historical industrial context of the chosen location and its morphology.

On the other hand, more will become clear about the skateboarding culture in Delft and the preferences from the users by **conducting interviews**. This will be done with people from the local skate community, people who design/build skate parks and urban planners or people from the municipality in Delft.

The practical framework will also be derived from **analysing the architectural or spatial elements** of skate spots and catalytic public spaces (along waterways).

### Literature and general practical preference

Literature on the history of Delft (and the 'Schieoevers'):

- Abrahamse, J.E., Van der Zee, A., Kosian, M., Van Mil, Y., IJselstein, M., & Feiken, R. (2017). *Atlas van de Schie. 2500 Jaar Werken aan Land en Water*. Bussum: Uitgeverij THOT
- Van der Gaag, S. (2015). *Historische Atlas van Delft*. Nijmegen: Uitgeverij Vantilt.
- Van der Vlis, I. (2015). *Vooruit met Veel Verleden. Geschiedenis van Delft vanaf 1795*. Zwolle: WBOOKS
- Van Hylckama Vlieg, L. H. E. (1931). Het Ontwerp-Uitbreidingsplan voor Delft en een Ontwerp-Streek-Plan voor Den Haag-Delft-R'dam. *Bouwbedrijf*, 8(5), 75-79.

Municipal documents:

- Gemeente Delft. (2015) Cultuurkader Delft 2016-2019. Focus op Cultuur. Het Creatief Vermogen van Delft.
- Gemeente Delft. (2017). Kadernota Innovatie Sociaal Domein 2017-2030, deel III Basis. Sterke basis voor een sociale stad.
- Gemeente Delft. (2017). Ruimtelijk-economische visie Delft 2030. Ondernemen en werken in Delft.
- Kuiper Compagnons (2018). Delft 2040 Ruimte voor Keuzes. Impactanalyse verstedelijkingsopgave Delft. Gemeente Delft.
- Marco.broekman (2019). Schieoevers Noord Delft. Ontwikkelplan. Definitief: 20 juni 2019. MaakSTAD aan de Delftse SCHIE. Gemeente Delft.

Literature on skateboarding and/ or architecture and public space:

- Borden, I. (2019). *Skateboarding and The City. A Complete History*. London; New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Friedel, S. (2015). *The Art of Living Sideways. Skateboarding, Peace and Elicitive Conflict Transformation*. Wiesbaden: Springer.
- Gehl, J. (2011). *Life Between Buildings*. Washington DC: Island Press.
- Hawk, T. (2018, October 9). *Thoughts on Olympic Skateboarding*. Retrieved at 2019 October 24, from <https://medium.com/s/story/skateboarding-will-be-in-the-olympics-in-less-than-two-years-4bdcb8734061>
- Lucas, R. (2015). *Research Methods for Architecture*. London: Laurence King Publishing Ltd

- O'Connor, P. (2018). Handrails, steps and curbs: sacred places and secular pilgrimage in skateboarding. *Sport in Society*, 21(11), 1651-1668.

#### Other

- Pushing Boarders: event which celebrates and critically discusses the social and cultural impact of skateboarding worldwide.

#### Interviews:

- Abdi M. (local skateboarder)
- Rob V. (local skateboarder)
- Martijn van H. (local skateboarder)
- Martijn van V. (local skateboarder)
- Gosse O. (local skateboarder)
- municipality Delft
- skate park designer/ architect

#### References skateparks:

- Middenberm (2002/2003), Delft
- Waterplein (2013), Rotterdam
- Schieplaza (2015), Schiedam
- Westblaak (2016), Rotterdam
- Topsport Skatepark (2018), Den Haag (indoor)

#### Reference projects:

- Users centered – reference: SESC Sao Paolo, by Lina Bo Bardi
- Industrial heritage – reference: park rio madrid, by WEST8
- Commotion along riverscape – reference: .....

## 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)?

In ExploreLab you start with a fascination you're interested to explore further. At the beginning of this graduation project my fascination started by the so-called 'Gesamtkunstwerk'. While trying to define the word I got stuck because of the discrepancy in its meaning. The thing I ran into the most was the fact that everything in and around the building would be very fixed and thus not flexible. Meaning there would barely be room for the user and its needs or different ways of interpreting the use of objects and spaces. This made me question my role as a future architect and so my research started to shift. Because I absolutely do not want to limit people in their own preferred and creative ways of using space and architecture and I also think it is very important to be open towards an unforeseeable future. So, I went looking for an inspiring user group that could use some help and found it in my hometown: the skateboarding community in Delft. To me an important sentence from one of the many texts in the master programme is "Architecture is constructed to serve the needs of people" (Lucas, 2015) which, in a nutshell, means that we should rather ASK people how they would like to live than TELL them.

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

The relevance of this project in the larger social, professional and scientific framework has not only to do with designing an architectural object for a disadvantaged but socially engaged group by asking them what their wishes are. But it is also dealing with a new kind of architectural typology: a building and/or landscape that contains a skatepark but also facilitates in stimulating encounters with other city users. A public space being a cultural ensemble, designed by applying a user centered approach, which would stimulate encounters between its users and gives them a place where they can (literally) build upon together. The graduation work will be based upon research on the needs of the user, the location on multiple contextual scales and its history, and upon analysed reference projects to eventually be able to make elaborated design decisions.