

# 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:

<b>Personal information</b>	
Name	Zeynep Yanikomeroglu
Student number	4769449

<b>Studio</b>		
Name / Theme	Designing for Health and Care – Towards an Inclusive Living Environment	
Main mentor	Leo Oorschot	Architecture Mentor
Second mentor	Maria Meizoso Aguilar	Building Technology Mentor
Third mentor	Birgit Jurgenhake	Research Mentor
Argumentation of choice of the studio	<p>My personal fascination towards people with physical disabilities comes from having a family member who suffers from a disease that makes them physically disabled. Seeing everyday struggles that are caused by architectural and urban design of our living environments affecting them and their families negatively, and also observing the co-dependence between the disabled individuals and their family caregivers which makes them socially isolated in their daily living, I decided to tackle this issue from the perspective of a future-architect with my graduation project. This studio combines health and care topics with research through anthropological methods, placing the target group at its center. Thinking that anyone can become disabled, or anyone might need to care for a loved-one one day, it is essential for our living environments to be inclusive for all – and I believe this is possible through designing with social integration in mind.</p>	

<b>Graduation project</b>	
Title of the graduation project	Physical Disabilities and Inclusive Living: Social Integration through Architectural and Urban Spaces
<b>Goal</b>	
Location:	Poptahof Noord, Delft, Netherlands
The posed problem,	A person with a physical disability often has no choice but to rely on their families. Between the physically disabled and the family caregiver, there is a co-dependence which affects both sides and how they live their individual daily lives. It is reported that this co-dependence creates feelings of burden and stress, social isolation and

	<p>emotional loneliness for both the people with disabilities and their family caregivers.</p> <p>There has been a good number of policies issued in the Netherlands with the aim of allowing as many people as possible to participate fully in society. The main aim is to help people with disabilities to live as they wish through changes in the social domain that will lead to noticeably fewer barriers. However, when it comes to participation and “barriers”, the first thing that comes to mind is the physical barriers that make access challenging. But accessibility and participation are also about the experiences people have once they access a particular environment. In other words, accessible and inclusive spaces are spaces that not only people can get into, but that they also feel welcome to be into. In the end, when we talk about an accessible society, we are talking about more than just the physical or practical barriers - the social barriers that are part of the social structure and the way the society and living environments are organized.</p>
<p>research questions and</p>	<p><b>Main Research Question:</b>  What kind of architectural and urban living environments can be integrated in the daily lives of the physically disabled adults (PDA) and their family caregivers (FC) to reduce their social isolation?</p> <p><b>Sub-Questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How does a day in the life of a Physically Disabled Adult (PDA) and their Family Caregivers (FC) look like?</li> <li>- What living conditions make PDA and FC feel socially isolated in their daily lives?</li> <li>- What living conditions help PDA and FC feel more socially integrated?</li> <li>- How should the architectural and urban living environment of the PDA and FC change to integrate them more in the society?</li> </ul>
<p>design assignment in which these result.</p>	<p>It is possible to find a solution to both the social and physical barriers within the daily lives of the physically disabled adults and their family caregivers by adjusting and designing architectural and urban living environments suitable for them to change the way they perceive their environments,</p>

their presence in the space and how others perceive their participation. The design output will aim to generate design guidelines for residential and neighborhood context to provide an inclusive living environment for everyone. These design guidelines will be implemented in a design proposal for an accessible and inclusive neighborhood concept with housing and public program in Poptahof Noord, Delft.

The aim of this research is to explore the architectural and urban living environments significant for the daily lives of PDA and FC to identify elements/conditions that enhance their feelings of social isolation & integration. Through this exploration, living conditions and features of the living environments that facilitate social integration of the PDA and FC will be determined and will form the basis for the design guidelines.

## **Process**

### **Method description**

Desktop research is the initial step of this research and starts off during the formulation of the problem statement and theoretical framework. It mainly consists of literature study to gather preliminary information and helps to form a foundation before going in the field and interacting with the target groups.

It is an essential part of this research to come in contact with the target group, PDA and FC, during the fieldwork of two weeks. As part of the fieldwork, activity, and training centers specific for PDA will be visited and some PDA and FC will be visited in their own homes. Observations are the primary data to be obtained during the fieldwork, which will facilitate the understanding of daily life and the living conditions and environments of PDA and FC.

To understand the target group (PDA & FC) thoroughly and to relate to their experiences in their daily lives, it is essential to get in direct contact with them to discuss and talk openly about their experiences, needs, opinions, and feelings. Interviews will be organized during the fieldwork week with PDA and FC who wish to participate in the research and who are open to share their experiences and daily lives. By recruiting interviewees through carefully chosen associations and institutions (which will not be named to protect their privacy), a wide range of information on PDA and FC will be gathered.

After the fieldwork, information gathered through observations and interviews will be brought together and then organized based on the topics mentioned in the theoretical framework of the research and based on what has been observed and what was mentioned by the target group.

Combining the information collected during the fieldwork with additional literature study will help to connect the experiences and answers to the interview questions of PDA and FC with architectural studies to obtain design guidelines and design applications that point to social integration of PDA and FC in their daily lives.

Case studies will act as a supporting method for the research to analyze and understand what has been done in architectural and urban projects before, what approaches have been applied to living environments of PDA and FC and to what extent these approaches can be used in the context of an inclusive neighbourhood. Design guidelines and applications that

were defined earlier will be identified within the case studies and possibly, additional design applications for the guidelines will be identified.

After applying all these methods, a complete set of design guidelines and design applications corresponding to the guidelines will be acquired using the fieldwork findings, literature study and case studies which will guide the upcoming design process.

#### Literature and general practical references

##### For Defining the Problem:

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##### For Theoretical Framework:

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For Literature Study:

Crewe, N. M., & Zola, I. K. (2001). *Independent living for physically disabled people*. iUniverse.

Goldsmith, S. (1997). *Designing for the disabled : the new paradigm*. Architectural Press.

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## **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)?

My graduation topic looks closely at people with physical disabilities and their family caregivers who are facing issues like social isolation because their living environments are not designed to facilitate their integration in society. What this research aims to show is that it is possible to find a solution to both the social and physical barriers by adjusting and designing architectural and urban living environments suitable for the physically disabled people and their families to change the way they perceive their environments, their presence in the space and how others perceive their participation. Within the master track Architecture, it is key to find solutions to urgent and/or pressing problems within the society that is created through designed spaces and architectural features – which is in line with what this research aims to do. This graduation studio in specific is a very fitting place for this research topic because of its focus on human centric research and the overarching topic of inclusivity. By going on fieldwork and interacting with the target group as part of this graduation studio, problems around disabilities can be better understood and designed for. MSc programme pays attention to academic side of the studies and this is also visible within this graduation project by having a complete research that starts with identifying the problem, forming a framework and then progresses with going on fieldwork to look for answers and supporting the answers using literature study and other research methods. This academically-based research will be the end result and will form the foundations for the design project. I believe my research will not only feed my design project, but also provide insight for architects and researchers on the topic of social integration of disabled adults and family caregivers and how it can be achieved through the design of architectural and urban living environments.

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

I believe as a future architect, it is essential for me to learn about different kinds of people and their needs and demands. Our societies are organized in such a way that living independently is almost impossible, especially for vulnerable groups. While dealing with such groups, it is especially important to listen to what they want from their living environments that they are spending majority of their times at, because they cannot leave their living environments as easily as the rest of the people in the society. Sometimes, what happens in practice is that architects overlook the people who will make use of the space. Or when it comes to physical disabilities, small interventions are done, such as addition of elevators or ramps. However, these are sometimes not enough to provide an inclusive experience for this target group.

I believe my topic offers perspective for a large societal and architectural issue. My topic focuses on people with physical disabilities and family caregivers, who have to learn how to live their lives with their conditions. It is sometimes the case that architects and designers tend to overlook their conditions and needs. Although a lot of research has been done on physically disabled adults and their family caregivers, it turns out that the connection is missing between their experiences in the society and the field of architecture & urban design. I hope to connect these two points, offer a new perspective for the people in the field and also apply what I have learnt in a design proposal.