

All about the ArchiDoct E-journal

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Architectural doctoral research produced by academic institutions is, with architectural practice, one of the main pillars of the generation of new architectural knowledge. However, this research record is dispersed and isolated in many centers, with limited communication among them, belonging to different research cultures, traditions and approaches without evident possibilities of generating a synthesis representing contemporary architectural doctoral research.

As a step towards the above objective, the **European Network of Heads of Schools of Architecture-ENHSA** (www.enhsa.net), an EU funded Network in the framework of the **Lifelong Learning Programme** is initiating the **ArchiDoct e-journal**, linked to and complementary with the **ENHSA Observatory** (<http://www.enhsa.net/main/observatory/>). Archidoct is a peer-reviewed e-journal aiming at fostering, enhancing and promoting doctoral research in architecture. The first point that underlines the originality of this endeavour is that the authors of the essays published are doctoral students in architecture. The second point that underlines this originality is that the journal is a mentoring, educational tool that aims at improving the writing skills of the authors as this will be advised by the peer reviewers towards academically coherent and rigorous writings.

Within this framework, the Editorial Board has invited contributions from doctoral students who are active members of the **ENHSA Observatory**. While they are all based in the general field of architecture, their research directions include topics in architectural design, building technology, computation, history, theory, art, product design, conservation, landscape design, environmental design, urbanism, regional planning and town planning. Each issue will also include one essay by a member of the Scientific Committee or other eminent academic as a good practice example.

The changes occurring nowadays in architectural education and professional practice have a significant impact on the way innovation and new architectural knowledge are generated. Schools of architecture are directed by the current dynamics to reform their doctoral education strategies, structures and processes in order to have a more efficient contribution to architectural research and innovation.

The Higher Education of Europe has changed tremendously since the Bologna Declaration was signed. One of the results of the transformation is the renewal of doctoral studies. While the two-cycle education of under- and graduate levels has become quite universal, its final destination – the third cycle in doctorate is still emerging. Here both the traditions and innovations intertwine, different research cultures run parallel and three letters (PhD) standing for doctor philosophiae can mean several different things, especially in architecture.

Even though the discussion about doctorates in architecture appears to be popular between academics, proved by the number of conferences on the subject, investigating the nature of the research in architecture and of doctorates in Architecture, the Doctorate as part of an educational process leading to a profile of contemporary researcher of architecture is marginally discussed. Similarly marginal is the exchange of ideas through the opening up of students on their progress, topic definition, methodological approach, validity, generalisability of findings, originality and contribution to knowledge. A publication that would foster and encourage doctoral students to share their research venture has been the aim of this peer-reviewed e-journal.

The present issue includes the good practice example and five essays by doctoral students. We hope that this has been a learning experience for both students and reviewers that will, in turn, encourage more doctoral students to come forward, improving their academic writing skills, enrich their research record but above all communicate their research, theme, methodology and findings to other fellow PhD students, enhancing that way their own venture. We would like to thank the authors of the first good practice example for offering us their text to include in the issue, our reviewers for accomplishing the demanding and laborious reviewing process and last but not least all the doctoral students for their courage and perseverance to publish their work in this issue.