

# forA on the Urban

forA on the Urban consists of different formats, contributions and content, evolving around a triple-legged presence composed of a discursive online platform, a series of yearly events, and a printed physical artefact. Towards the journal launch of issue #0 the Institute of Architecture at the University of Applied Arts Vienna is seeking contributions until January 8, 2021.

## MANIFESTO

1. *forA on the Urban* examines the open, unfinished, multi-scaled, interconnected, complex and wild nature of urban manifestations, challenges and situations through an expanded notion of architecture.
2. Due to the expansive nature and increasing scale of the processes of artificialisation and the parallel deterioration of our environment, most of the current demands on our civilisations are, in one way or another, intrinsically linked to the urban condition.
3. Architecture has always had a central role and a responsibility to meet challenges that cause dramatic changes in social life. Architecture will only continue to remain of societal relevance if it is willing to accept its societal responsibility and get in closer working contact with other disciplines, as the global challenges cannot be met through mono-discipline approaches.
4. We need to consider the interrelationships that produce challenges that tend to create situations of irreversible deterioration of the living conditions of our and other species, due to their complex, accelerative, multicausal, irreversible and entangled nature, all in order to detect, examine, analyse and understand these situations in a way that goes beyond the common frames of reference and available practical tools.
5. Correspondingly, defining the parameters of the urban are crucial to the themes that orient the journal as both process and artefact. Only by destabilising scalar (disciplinary, and methodological) limitations can common practices of analysing urbanity through isolated categories be challenged.
6. Exploring the formats of discursive essays, investigations and projects incites reflection and discussion towards an experimental multilogue and valuable contribution to the discourse around the urban. Embracing the notions of treatise, disquisition, and literary and artistic exploration of the essay aims to contribute to the necessary renovation of established vocabulary, formats, and methodologies, and the deconstructions of their very limits.
7. Thus, combining research with practical approaches and analysis, the journal seeks to articulate new formulations of urbanism.

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS  
Deadline 8 January 2021

The call addresses individuals and groups, academics, practitioners and students who work in the spatial disciplines. It is open – but not limited to – architects, urbanists, artists and scientists, as much as it is to scholars from the humanities who investigate the present and (possible) future of urban processes, conditions and challenges through theoretical, practical and artistic reflection.

We welcome all types of contributions, ranging from academic traditions to emerging approaches that emphasize a multiplicity of formats, from the traditional essay and scholarly article to discursive, documentary, cartographic, photographic and cinematic investigations.

Abstract submissions shall be directed at three main areas of approaches: *Entangled Spatial Qualities / Processes of Dialogue and Collaboration / Challenging Methods of Articulation*. From the submissions, 12 entries across all these areas of approaches will be selected by the editors for further development. Full entries will be peer reviewed and feedback and recommendations will be provided for either publishing in issue#0 of the journal or publishing in the framework of the discursive online platform.

*Entangled Spatial Qualities* The journal addresses investigations that put an emphasis on exploring phenomena of the entangled qualities of the natural, artificial, lived and built environment, as much as that of social formations. We are particularly interested in radical shifts in perspective in both temporal and spatial scales that move beyond established concepts and assumed models of reality. Accordingly, this section aims at questions that evolve around new understandings of known problematics as much as the identification of spaces and situations that are yet to be declared as terrain for architectural thought.

*Processes of Dialogue and Collaboration* The journal – as it is embedded in its title – will emphasize the notion of the fora in all their diverse potentialities. We are interested in dialogical, collaborative and experimental approaches that may be manifested in the form of processual contributions by authors from diverse disciplines and backgrounds. These may be conversations, reflections and provocations on the urban, in dialogue with or from within fields such as anthropology, technological and cultural studies, visual culture, ecology, geo-humanities and sociology, and from places and regions that are geographically and culturally underrepresented in urban discourse.

*Challenging the Methods* The journal will place special emphasis on contributions that present new approaches and methodologies for inquiry, identification, description, analysis, intervention and theorisation of different urban realities. We are interested in gathering and presenting relevant essays that contribute to innovations in tools and methods that also imply a projective character, making possible a renewed and non-linear relation with the temporal dimension of the urban. We are interested as well in those investigations that pay attention to innovative formats of research, transformation and understanding, integrating them from early stages.

### Specification of Abstracts

Abstracts should have a length of 400 words and a maximum of two images, and include the affiliation/incorporation of disciplinary fields, a declaration of its area of investigation, and the envisioned format of the later full contribution.

### Specification of Full Contributions

Emphasizing the open format essay, full contributions can follow a literary or non-literary path:

Scholarly contributions must have a length of between 1500–2500 words (excluding captions, footnotes and references)

Non-scholarly contributions must be accompanied by a text no longer than 800 words (excluding captions, footnotes and references).

## SUBMISSION

### Submissions & Schedule

8 January 2021: Submission of abstracts: 400 words + max 2 images

18 January 2021: Notification from editors of acceptance/rejection

1 March 2021: Submissions of full essays

31 March 2021: Receipt of feedback from peer reviewers

19 April 2021: Submissions of final essays

### Eligibility

Any individual, group or collective from any discipline or combination of disciplines is eligible to submit an abstract for forA. Given the journal's multidisciplinary format, we are interested in publishing works carried out by groups made up of individuals or collectives from different fields of study, exploring innovative collaborative formats.

### Selection Process & Criteria for Evaluation

For the full-length essays, we encourage and expect a broad spectrum of essay formats. Nevertheless, the ones submitted in the format of a classical scholarly essay and the written parts of the rest of the formats should follow *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Essays submitted for consideration must not have been previously published, or under consideration for publication in another journal or any other medium. If any kind of publication or dissemination has occurred, or if the work has been presented through a different medium, the essay should pay due credit to the original source.

To be finally published, full essays will have received a positive peer review whereas great care is taken to distribute each contribution to at least two peer reviewers with corresponding expertise. In order to be admitted to the review process, the work must have been sent within the given set period.

Positive or negative evaluations must be accompanied by a justification included in a report, which will remain strictly confidential. Assessment reports must not bear any signature or other identifying mark of the evaluator. The report will establish which of the following situations apply to the essay: publishable, publishable with changes, unpublishable. In the second of these scenarios, possible improvements to be made by the author shall be included in the review. If the amendments requested for a contribution are substantial, this may be sent back to the evaluator for a second review.

Peer reviewers will give feedback for a final iteration with respect to either allocating the entry to the issue #0 of the journal or publishing it on the discursive online platform.

The final submitted essays will be accompanied by images in a digital format of a sufficient quality (minimum 300 dpi). It is the author's responsibility to supply accurate information for the credits and captions and to contact the author in order to confirm image ownership and secure publication rights.

### Criteria of Evaluation

The criteria for the evaluation of the abstracts and final essays will be based on multiple parameters, including: the relevance of the topic in relation to the open call, the clarity and interest of the topic, the methodological rigor and newness, the originality, depth and quality of the work, the interest of the collaboration model among the authors, the format chosen in relation to the topic addressed, and finally, the intellectual contribution to the field of urban studies.