

The architectural disciplines are called for a strong and inspiring position in current challenges of European societies. In public and political debates, their role for the ecological reconfiguring of the whole building sector, for the transition of cities to climate-neutrality and resilience, but also for social inclusion, accessibility, and affordability is increasingly acclaimed. And, in particular by the initiative New European Bauhaus, the holistic approach of architecture is seen as an asset, not at least for a cultural and behavioural change to sustainability that stresses the value of everyday living spaces and new aesthetics. Obviously, research in architecture will be essential in the coming years, and its interaction with other disciplines and society. The authors of this contribution are currently launching an initiative of the German TU9 architecture faculties to establish together discipline-specific concepts and standards for research evaluation.

Starting from a research project on the German and European context in this regard, this contribution aims to define consequences of an enhanced research orientation in architecture, via three steps: First, we outline a working definition of design research in architecture as fundamental research, since design is at the core of architectural thinking and work. Problem-oriented methodologies are in the foreground of discussions, cognition-oriented and practice-based works lead to new definitions of open and evolving research processes. Second, the contribution explores pathways to position design research in architecture as fundamental research.

This concerns academia as well as society, funding programmes and research assessment schemes. It regards discussions about transferability, feedback to theories, and communicating methods and results: in a discipline-specific range of research outputs, such as exhibitions, performances, material/digital artefacts, designs, and publication practices. Third, the contribution highlights the demand for a new research-orientation in innovating practice and education, and asks about linkages with positioning research in architecture.

Positioning research in architecture: problem-oriented methodologies

*Martin Luce, Mieke Pfarr-Harfst,
Judith Reeh, Jörg Schröder
and Oliver Tessmann*
Leibniz University Hannover