

The power of an architect's competences in interdisciplinary research: the case of the Belgian-Tanzanian IUC partnership

Els Hannes - Rob Cuyvers

In answer to the calls' questions in 'Roots of Architecture(s)', we explain the 'Ways of Research' in a concrete case, with a focus on its interdisciplinary dimensions, its envisioned tangible social impact, its embedded communities' participation and its social urgency.

We identify the role of an architect's competences in the process prior to the start of the project, and we argue that these critical, creative and collaborative problem-solving skills have been (and still are) of vital importance for its success.

Therefore, we present the 10-year, 6 MIO EUR Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) partnership project with Ardhi University in Tanzania, funded by the Flemish University Development Cooperation (VLIR-UOS), initiated and coordinated by the faculty of Architecture and Arts of Hasselt University in Belgium: "Establishing 'the African Centre for Sustainable Cities Studies' to build capacity in education, research, innovation and societal outreach in order to foster an inclusive and sustainable built environment in a rapidly urbanizing city, Dar es Salaam".

We explain how this project is rooted in a long-standing, fruitful collaboration between 2 schools of architecture and how this project was defined and developed since the initial call in 2019 up to the official start in September 2022.

Hence, we argue that architecture education should continue empowering students to take up the central role of spatial change agents in a complex, multidisciplinary world.

Dr. Arch. Els Hannes is the International Coordinator of the Faculty of Architecture and Arts of Hasselt University in Belgium.

Prof. Ir. Rob Cuyvers is Dean Emeritus of the Faculty of Architecture and Arts of Hasselt University and Flemish coordinator VLIR-UOS IUC partnership with Ardhi University.

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