

## **Languages, Things, Practice: Architecture as in-discipline**

*ENSAPLV Journée de la Recherche (JdR, Research Day) — 28 mai 2026*

A recent discussion about the Research Strategy of the Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Paris-la Villette (ENSAPLV) led the six laboratories – AHTTEP, AMP, GEPHAU, LAA, LET, MAAC – to reflect on what is common to their approaches to architectural research. The discussions highlighted architecture's capacity to be an inviting force, together with the "related disciplines" that colour our research practices in architecture.

Initially an *art of building*, the emancipation of the Beaux-Art and the creation of *les Unités Pédagogiques* sparked a new dynamic in architectural research in France. Its disciplinary framework is then defined "by the respective fields of architectural studies, technological research and urban research", but from 1976 onwards, "blurred [by] the boundaries between disciplines"<sup>1</sup>.

Architecture then comes forward as in-disciplined. It maintains an ambivalent relationship with its related disciplines (urbanism, landscape, sociology, anthropology, history, ecology, geography, philosophy, and engineering).

Today, how do we create knowledge within the profession of architecture, through the introduction of new questions and new ways of research?

The recent boom in "studies" in the English-speaking academic world marks less a simple diversification of academic offerings than a genuine reconfiguration of disciplinary boundaries. These positions shift the references: they construct their own concepts and paradigms, transform words and develop methods, all while claiming a critical position of indiscipline.

This challenge to "normal science"<sup>2</sup> brings to light objects that have long been considered unclassifiable and ignored complexities. In this reconfiguration, architecture is not immune to friction, both in its construction as an in-discipline and in its relationship to transdisciplinarity. How can we develop a rigorous approach that is situated, relational and legitimate? How can we develop a common language when vocabularies differ? What role should serendipity play in the production of knowledge?

**The next Journée de la Recherche (JdR) aims to open up this debate: How can we think of architecture as an interdisciplinary field, not to feel free from all rigour, but to experiment with other ways of doing science?**

To push this reflection and to initiate dialogue between the driving forces behind research at ENSAPLV and elsewhere, we propose three themes to structure your proposals. These are merely starting points, invitations to think about architecture as an in-discipline.

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<sup>1</sup> Lesterlin, 1974 cité par Mansion-Prud'homme, N., (2025) « La place de l'histoire dans la création d'une politique publique de la recherche architecturale : l'impulsion du Corda », in *Les Cahiers de la recherche architecturale urbaine et paysagère* [En ligne], <https://doi.org/10.4000/13twz>

<sup>2</sup> Mahé E., Belin et Gobbi (2025), « Recherches indisciplinées » dans le champ académique : contradiction, supercherie ou nécessité ?", in *Culture et Recherche* n°149,132-135

### **CRÉER UN LANGAGE - TO CREATE A LANGUAGE**

The vocabulary currently in use — from “regeneration” to “resilience”, from “placemaking” to “co-design” — reflects cultural, technological and political transformations that influence how architectural in·discipline represents itself and is represented.

Attention to language, the semiotic and performative dimensions of architectural terms, enables us to critically examine the processes through which meanings, professional identities and public narratives are constructed.

Creating a language also means allowing dialogues to emerge and exist. The vocabulary used becomes a way of constructing a perspective and questioning our research subjects differently.

How can we talk about (research in) architecture? How does the practice of a shared language reflect the in·disciplinary nature of architecture?

### **SE RAPPROCHER DES CHOSES - GETTING CLOSER TO THINGS - GATHERING AROUND THINGS**

The formulation of an architectural research topic requires theoretical and methodological reflection that encompasses knowledge acquired in architecture and related disciplines. These "things", constructed as architectural in·discipline, bring together the artefacts specific to the act of building, the spatial and temporal practices of architecture, and their results. It is also the subject-object of the research.

So what are the things that architectural in·discipline looks at? I.e. those unfinished entities that are also composed of gestures, knowledge and relationships? How do these things contribute to bringing architectural in·discipline to life and helping it to evolve?

### **PRODUIRE DES PRATIQUES - PRODUCING PRACTICES**

Alliances with "related disciplines" shape the ways knowledge is produced in architecture. Between qualitative surveys and quantitative approaches, source and archive analysis, graphic techniques, design-based research, and field immersion, architectural research draws on a wide range of tools that are often reconfigured through contact with other fields.

This section invites us to examine the actions, protocols and methodological hybridisations that structure our practices: how do the approaches developed in the project shift the objects of research?

How do methods developed in architecture challenge other relationships with materials, space, and time? How do methods from other disciplines challenge architectural in·discipline? What possibilities do these methodological in·disciplines open up? And how can these experiments be systematized without reducing their exploratory scope?

## **Organizing Committee**

Alexandre GAISER FERNANDES (AMP), Diana DI MATTEO (ATTHEP), Anna KEITEMEIER (AMP), Zelal KOÇ (LAA), Quentin MONTES (GERPAU), Emilie PILLON (LAA)

[journeedelarecherche@paris-lavillette.archi.fr](mailto:journeedelarecherche@paris-lavillette.archi.fr)

## **SUBMISSION**

There are three ways to participate in the JDR. Proposals are due by **March 26, 2026** to the following address: [journeedelarecherche@paris-lavillette.archi.fr](mailto:journeedelarecherche@paris-lavillette.archi.fr)

This call for proposals is open to everyone (master's degree students, post-master's students, doctoral students, post-docs, teachers in architecture and related fields).

## **INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATIONS - ROUND TABLES:**

The aim is to propose a paper that echoes one of the proposed themes. Participants will have 15 minutes to present their ideas, followed by a discussion led by a moderator.

To participate in a round table >>>> please send your proposal (maximum 1,000 words) including: title, summary of the proposal, keywords (max. 5), indicative bibliography (max. 5) by May 11, 2026. An abstract of no more than 2,000 words in French or English will be requested for publication in a booklet summarizing the day's proceedings.

## **ATELIERS – WORKSHOPS:**

With the aim of creating opportunities for exchange and dialogue between laboratories, as well as for collective reflection and debate, the call for proposals may take the form of workshops, which facilitate cross-disciplinary exchanges.

To propose a workshop >>>> Please send a proposal (maximum 1,000 words) including: title, description of the workshop, indicative bibliography, academic affiliation, other requirements, estimated number of participants by May 11, 2026. A summary of the workshop of max. 2,000 words in French and English will be requested in order to publish a booklet of the day.

## **POSTERS:**

Graphic representation – drawing in particular – plays a major role in our research work. For this JDR, we propose organizing a research poster session, which will provide a space for freedom of expression and graphic representation, and will highlight a form of artistic expression that is part of our expertise as architects, both as a tool for producing knowledge and for representing it.

To submit a poster >>>> Please send a poster draft (in A4 format) including: the title, keywords, an abstract, and a sketch of the graphic design.

The final poster, in any format, should be sent by May 20, 2026, in digital format to [journeedelarecherche@paris-lavillette.archi.fr](mailto:journeedelarecherche@paris-lavillette.archi.fr). It will be printed and displayed by the organizing committee.

## **TIMELINE:**

- > March 26, 2026: Deadline for submission of proposals
- > Beginning of April 2026: Review and feedback on proposals by the organizing committee
- > May 11, 2026: Receipt of final proposal for submission to discussants (except posters)
- > June 8, 2026: Deadline for postscripts
- > End of June 2026: Distribution of the booklet