‘Amidst the large scale of severe changes the world is facing we need to have understanding and capabilities in handling the wicked problems. The WiT Programme is a strong take on helping people to help themselves.’

– Saija Hollmén, Professor of Practice in Humanitarian Architecture at Aalto University

The new Aalto WiT Programme aims to bridge capacities to advance resilience of the most vulnerable communities.
Aalto WiT Programme is a transdisciplinary professional diploma programme under the Aalto University World in Transition Research LAB (WiTLAB).

The programme focuses on the resilience of human settlements in low- and middle-income countries.

- In partnership with organisations, the programme combines scientific methodologies with work-life experiences in the field through real-life cases.
- The programme is intended for professionals and academics in the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, design, engineering, business, and social sciences.
Why to join the WiT Programme?

Through learning from experts you will be able to:

- Communicate and collaborate with stakeholders in identifying and responding to the needs of vulnerable communities.
- Utilise methods for planning management and implementation of projects in partnership with stakeholders.
- Acquire strategic and practical knowledge about methods, tools and procedures in multi-stakeholder environments.
- Develop personal competencies in transdisciplinary and intercultural collaboration.
- Gain capacities to enhance preparedness and resilience of societies amidst crises.
- Combine knowledge and practical experience in societal development in the humanitarian context.
Programme in a nutshell

Moving towards decolonised practices with engaged partners, based on mutual knowledge creation and sharing, while aiming at societal impact.

- Under the umbrella of *Humanitarian Architecture*, the programme considers the thematic areas of:
  - Sustainable Built Environment
  - Cultural Heritage and Development
  - Humanitarian Responses

- The programme offers life-wide learning through real life case studies in the field

- The study credits are officially registered and transferable, providing a 30 credits diploma

- The programme starts in January 2024

- The application period is 15th of August – 30th of September 2023
Humanitarian architecture – what does it mean?

As a general theme of the programme, humanitarian architecture aims at the betterment of living conditions of vulnerable communities.

- It engages with the primary needs of humans in precarious situations, concentrating on processes rather than products.
- It considers emergency relief, transitional shelters and reconstruction in disaster or conflict zones.
- Humanitarian architecture can equally be understood as long term recovery and poverty alleviation, participatory planning and as community engagement in vulnerable communities.
- It can also refer to culturally appropriate and locally adapted architectural design solutions in low resource settings.
WiT Programme timeline

January
- Otaniemi Camp
  - Co-located in Finland
  - Kick-off
  - General introduction
  - Case specific content

February
- Field work
  - Project plan
  - Field trip

March
- Incubation
  - Hybrid
  - Data analysis / reflection
  - Milestone review
  - Individual project work

April
- Final seminar

May

ECTS:
- January: 14 ECTS
- February: 6 ECTS
- March: 10 ECTS
Otaniemi Camp in details

Kick-off
- Introduction
- Team building
- Partnering organisations

General content
- Humanitarian architecture
- Decolonising sustainability
- Systems/resilience thinking
- Futures studies
- Coaching

Case-specific content
- Cultural heritage
- Humanitarian response
- Sustainable built environment
- Coaching
- Training of Trainers (ToT)

Project plan
- Theoretical framework
- Research design
- Field-work plan
- Ethics

Research & Theory Seminar Series

Project Management Workshop Series
About us

Saija Hollmén
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Professor of Practice in Humanitarian Architecture
Architect, D.Sc. (Arch)

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Postdoc Researcher
D.Sc. (Tech)

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MA (Econ)

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Doctoral candidate

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Faculty member
Landscape Architect,
M.Sc. (Landscape Arch)
Lecturer

Kristjana Adalgeirsdóttir
Faculty member
Architect, M.Sc. (Arch)
Doctoral candidate
Shelter Delegate

Our expertise

- **Interdisciplinary education on PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING** in real-world situations
- **PROJECT MANAGEMENT** in emergencies, cultural sensitivity in reconstruction
- **SYSTEMS & RESILIENCE** thinking
- **Empathic Design** and architecture with impact
- **Manifestation of SUSTAINABILITY** in human settlements

Architecture as a SOCIO-CULTURAL CONSTRUCTION

- **Manifestation of SUSTAINABILITY** in human settlements
- **Systems & Resilience** thinking
- **Empathic Design** and architecture with impact
- **Interdisciplinary education on Problem-based learning** in real-world situations
- **Project management** in emergencies, cultural sensitivity in reconstruction

- **Architecture as a Socio-cultural construction**
Finnish Church Aid is Finland’s largest international aid organisation, who believes in everyone’s right to peace, quality education and sustainable livelihoods.

The Stone Town Conservation and Development Authority (STCDA) of Zanzibar is a Governmental institution responsible for controlling and managing conservation activities in the Stone Town World Heritage Site (WHS).

The UN-Habitat promotes socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities, working as the hub for all urbanisation and human settlement matters within the UN.

The UN Refugee Agency is a global organization dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and building a better future for people forced to flee their homes because of conflict.

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As a part of the global RLabs movement, RLabs Tanzania tackles poverty and challenges the development sector to empower people to transform their own lives.

The Building and Road Research Institute (BRRI) in Ghana aims to encourage demand-driven and problem-based research, by offering training and technology transfer.

The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Ghana advances knowledge by research, quality teaching and community engagement to improve lives.

The University of Rwanda supports development by discovering and advancing knowledge, committing to the highest standards of academic excellence.

Our partners

All our partners will provide unique study cases out in the field, supporting the students with life-wide learning experiences.
Previous real-life projects under Aalto WiTLAB

Aalto WiT Programme is built upon 30 years of experience with real-life projects in different parts of the world.
WiT minor alumni

Emma Hannula
CEO & lead consultant at Finngroup Consultants and Architects

“Development work challenges an architect to think outside the box and provides a wider perspective. It can be rewarding to offer one’s professional skills to support the sustainable development of emerging economies.”

Lassi Tähtinen
Doctoral candidate, Department of Built Environment, Aalto University

“The real-life cases provide an opportunity to realise how the practical context can affect the theoretical understanding and abstractions of sustainability issues.”

Eve Zorawska
UNHCR Shelter & Settlements officer

“My biggest take away from real-life project courses has been the introduction to socially inclusive approaches and methods. The course provided us tools on how to better identify marginalized groups among a population and how to create safe spaces for them to participate in a design or decision-making process.”

Niina Rinne
Programme Management Officer at UN-Habitat

“During my studies, I never thought that the UN could be a career option for architects as our training back then was focused only on the traditional role of an architect in Finland. But I discovered there is a huge need for professional urban development specialists in the international humanitarian development field.”
Where can you work after graduating?

International organisations: Programme planning, coordination, monitoring and evaluation, advocacy

Non-governmental organisations: Project design and management, community capacity building, support to forced displacements

Public sector: Urban planning, resilience and disaster management planning

Private sector: Consulting, entrepreneurship

Academic institutions: Research, teaching, mentoring
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Application period</strong></th>
<th>15th August - 30th September 2023</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration</strong></td>
<td>5 months (Jan-May) Period III-V</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prerequisites</strong></td>
<td>Master’s degree, or Bachelor’s degree + 3 years of working experience</td>
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<td><strong>Credits</strong></td>
<td>30 credits diploma</td>
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<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>English</td>
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<td><strong>Mode of study</strong></td>
<td>On-site and hybrid</td>
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<td><strong>Tuition fees</strong></td>
<td>9,200 € + 24 % VAT</td>
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Do you want to become a **positive catalyst** for addressing the future challenges?

**Find out more**

**Websites**

aalto.fi/en/wit-programme
aalto.fi/en/witlab

**Social media**

instagram.com/aaltowitlab
linkedin.com/company/aalto-witlab
facebook.com/AaltoWITLAB

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