

Domesticity in Educational Architecture (València, 20-21 Jan 27)

Faculty of Architecture, Universitat Politècnica de València, Spain, Jan 20–21, 2027
Deadline: Mar 15, 2026

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Domesticity in Educational Architecture – The Spatial Politics of Learning Environments.

Beyond their pedagogical functions, school buildings have long served as discrete instruments of cultural and ideological articulation. Domesticity, so far little explored in contrast to other approaches, offers a way to examine how educational architecture unsettles the traditional hierarchies of public institutions – hierarchies that privilege authority, surveillance, and rational order—by introducing spatial qualities associated with care, intimacy, and welfare. During the twentieth century, educational institutions were increasingly interpreted as affectively charged environments—a ‘second home’ for children—yet such framings often rested upon particular cultural assumptions about what a home is and for whom it is meant. This call invites reflections on how domesticity, as an architectural and ideological construct, has shaped the spatial practices of schools across cultural and historical contexts. Domesticity is understood here as a culturally and historically situated mode of spatial organisation through which social ideologies are both articulated and contested.

In order to explore how the concept of ‘home’ is spatialised in educational architecture, we ask contributors to focus on how domesticity mediates socio-political conditions, including post-World War Two welfare reform, colonial legacies, and shifting norms around childhood, care, and citizenship. In what ways is the notion of ‘home’ spatially and materially reimagined within institutional environments for children and youth? How are notions of familiarity, safety, and belonging spatially constructed, and how are they specific to diverse cultural and historical conditions? We are particularly interested in contributions that consider the school as a site of socio-material practices—where care, discipline, resistance, and identity are enacted—and which approach domesticity as a situated concept. The aim is to foreground exceptionality rather than generalisation, emphasising the specificity of cultural responses to the question of what it means to render a school ‘home-like’. By extending the analysis across elementary, secondary, and university spaces, this call also seeks to trace how domesticity is differentially interpreted according to age and curriculum.

Selected participants will be invited to contribute to an international seminar in January 2027 to be held at the Faculty of Architecture, Universitat Politècnica de València, Spain.

Please submit a 300 word proposal and short (2-page) CV.
Abstracts are due by March 15, 2026.

Submissions and inquiries should be directed to bodies.others@arq.upv.es

Authors will be notified of the Organizing and Scientific board's decision in early May 2026.

Authors of accepted abstracts will be asked to submit a full paper, 2000–3000 words.

<https://school-domesticity.cargo.site>

Organizing board:

Dr. Paula Lacomba (Assistant Professor of Architecture, Department of Architecture, Universitat Politècnica de València)

Prof. Julie Willis (Dean and Professor of Architecture. Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning University of Melbourne)

Dr. Clara E. Mejía (Associate Professor of Architecture (Titular). Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura, Universitat Politècnica de València)

Scientific board:

Prof. Janina Gosseye (Professor of Building Ideologies, Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, Delft University of Technology. Councillor EAHN)

Prof. Kate Darian-Smith (The University of Melbourne President of the Australian Academy of the Social Sciences)

Prof. Eva Branscome (Professor of Architecture and Cultural Heritage, The Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London)

Dr. Maja Lorbek (Researcher FWF project "Transnational School Construction" Faculty of Architecture and Planning, TU Wien)

Dr. Alejandro Campos (Associate Professor of Architecture (PPL). Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura, Universitat Politècnica de València)

Dr. Carla Sentieri (Associate Professor of Architecture (Titular). Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura, Universitat Politècnica de València)

Dr. Cameron Logan (Associate Professor at the School of Architecture, Design & Planning, the University of Sydney)

Reference:

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