

UNSOLICITED ARCHITECTURE

Tutor: Prof. Ole Bouman, As. Professor Weng Chao

Number of participants: 10 Exchange students + 10 Tongji students

Studio Time: Sep. 14 – Sep. 30, 2026
and Nov. 2 – Dec. 2, 2026

Studio Place: Monday 9:00–12:00 & Wednesday 13:30–16:50

First Meeting: Monday, September 14, C205

Introduction :

1. Introduction: Architecture beyond its conventional boundaries

Architecture has stretched beyond three of its most respected limits: its definition as the art of making buildings, its discourse through scripted printed media and static exhibitions, and its training as a matter of master and apprentice. Pushing these limits challenges both the mandate and self conception of the discipline. Architecture needs new modes of operation that bring together the creation, mediation and appreciation of space.

This also means questioning the conditions under which architecture normally comes into being. As it is practiced today, architecture is all too often a responsive profession. Architects take direction from clients, working within a project brief, a predetermined budget, a given site and an assigned program. While this model is pragmatic, it leaves little room for architecture to define its own agenda or to explore disciplinary formats that may respond more directly to wider social needs. The agency of architecture consequently remains largely confined to the level of the project.

2. Unsolicited Architecture: a new mode of practice

The Studio for Unsolicited Architecture proposes an alternative: a form of practice that proactively seeks out territories for intervention rather than waiting for an assignment. It asks what architecture might do when it is not initiated by a client, secured by a budget, anchored to a site or justified by a predetermined program.

In other words, instead of asking where can we find a client?, it asks where are we needed? Instead of asking what will pay our bills?, it asks where can investments be made? Instead of asking where can architecture be built?, it asks when can it happen? And

instead of asking what is it for?, it asks what could its purpose be?

The studio therefore seeks to abandon, or at least temporarily suspend, one or more of the four conventional cornerstones of architectural practice: the client, the budget, the place and the program. By doing so, it aims to develop practical strategies for moving beyond the functional limits of architecture as we know it and to reclaim a more proactive agency for the discipline.

The Studio for Unsolicited Architecture is, ultimately, an experiment in establishing a different professional position: one that actively hunts for architecture that is interesting, innovative, subversive, creative, transgressive, reflective, sustainable, attainable, idealistic, profitable and, above all, forever unsolicited.

3. Pedagogical structure

Part I — Six Lessons: Understanding and trying out an unsolicited architecture

The studio begins with six analytical lessons to understand the nature of unsolicited architecture and develop clues to develop the courage to propose it. The classroom will be re-conceived as an imaginary studio.

Part II — Ten Lessons: Designing UnsolicitedArchitecture

Building on this analytical foundation, the studio proceeds with ten design lessons focused on developing a range of scenarios for unsolicited architecture to become relevant, urgent and successful. The studio will develop its own imaginary portfolio.

Key Words

Expanding Architecture, Design Courage, Autonomy of Architecture, Unsolicited Practice, Alternative Business Models, Social Relevance.

Schedule

	Date	Schedule
Week 1	Sep. 14th (Mon. 1-4)	Theoretical exploration
	Sep. 16th (Wed. 5-8)	Theoretical exploration
Week 2	Sep. 21st (Mon. 1-4)	Theoretical exploration
	Sep. 23rd (Wed. 5-8)	Theoretical exploration

Week 3	Sep. 28th (Mon. 1-4)	Theoretical exploration
	Sep. 30th (Wed. 5-8)	Mid Review
Week 8	Nov. 2 nd (Mon. 1-4)	Project individual/group
	Nov. 4 th (Wed. 5-8)	Project individual/group
Week 9	Nov. 9 th (Mon. 1-4)	Project individual/group
	Nov. 11 th (Wed. 5-8)	Project individual/group
Week 10	Nov. 16 th (Mon. 1-4)	Project individual/group
	Nov. 18 th (Wed. 5-8)	Project individual/group
Week 11	Nov. 23 rd (Mon. 1-4)	Project individual/group
	Nov.25 th (Wed. 5-8)	Project individual/group
Week 12	Nov. 30 th (Mon. 1-4)	Project individual/group
	Dec. 2 nd (Wed. 5-8)	Final Presentation