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The fifth edition of the *Lucerne Talks—Symposium for Architectural Pedagogies* series deals with current urban planning challenges in relation to practice, teaching, and research in architecture education and practice from different vantage points.

The present positions, texts, and essays emerged from the latest *Symposium for Architectural Pedagogies*, which was held in November 2023 under the theme of “Teaching Urbanism” and took place at the Institute of Architecture (IAR) at the Lucerne School of Engineering and Architecture. The Lucerne Talks see themselves primarily as a cross-institutional platform that initiates an exchange on an eye-to-eye level from different positions. However, a so-called equal exchange is only possible to a limited extent at a symposium. This is one of the reasons why this book was created. It aims to give all participants in the symposium a voice and offers them an opportunity to contribute to the discourse on contemporary urbanism.

This book is therefore an urgent call for everyone to take on responsibility and position themselves politically, socially, and culturally, here and now. Planning policy requires participation from stakeholders in the city, countryside, and periphery. After all, the planning of living environments and the design of buildings cannot be thought of separately, but only together.

In this sense, these collections of texts are being understood as a kind of collective, a shared written dialogue. Although the contributions consist of different concepts and narrative styles, they testify to a common understanding of the need to apply different, multidisciplinary approaches, attitudes, and methods to be able to cope with ecological and social challenges in urban planning.

Heike Biechteler,
Johannes Käferstein

Recent experience has taught us that we must conceive new approaches for built environments. In all cases, it is necessary to ensure that everyone and every member of society is included in the shaping of cities and in regard to our shared habitat.

“The lasting effects of the economic and financial crisis, the fourth industrial revolution, accelerated urbanisation, the shrinking of peripheral regions, migration and social change, increasing inequality, climate change and environmental damage are having a major impact [...] on our living environment.”¹

These underlying conditions have far-reaching consequences for the planning of cities and urban situations at a more general level. They demand that we “carefully and sustainably think about all the resources available to us. Careful consideration must be given to the use of resources such as open space, green and forest areas, cultivated land and materials such as stone and brick, and natural elements such as water and fresh air [...] therefore it seems necessary that we rethink the city as a whole.”²

For architects, the overall notion of urbanism is concerned with two important issues: Firstly, the need to develop an understanding of cities and environments, which are the result of complex sociotechnical processes. And secondly, both general and specific approaches are required in which design plays a key role in developing solutions. We must therefore begin to understand that the processes of planning cities and environments are interconnected. The discipline of architecture cannot be addressed separately and alone, but only in collaboration with all the stakeholders involved. Arguably, we can only serve the collective needs of the common

¹ Swiss Confederation, Davos Declaration 2018, p.8.

² Tom Avermaete, "Grosse Pläne, grosse Herausforderungen," in *Du: Die Rückkehr des Städtebaus*, vol. 910 (2021), p. 17.