Mismatch
How Inclusion Shapes Home

Overview
In an overwhelming race to offer housing solutions, the valuable qualitative design process that prioritizes and critically involves end-users is minimized or sometimes eliminated altogether. Sadly, our society knows a housing crisis better than housing options, which has then normalized the current limited housing choices. In this context, we often produce housing defined more by financial constraints and marketability instead of the emerging new societal realities and individual needs. When we think of families and individuals at the intersection with other factors such as (dis)ability, poverty, and illness, we delve into an audience of even greater vulnerability. Marginalized into institutions for decades, these groups have been affected and disenfranchised across many spheres, including access to housing. The latter, in combination with a lack of design sensitivity, has resulted in spatial mismatches, creating barriers, often affecting health and social outcomes, further isolation and stigmatization. But what are the changes we need in the build environment to be inclusive and how can we understand and design for change?

Students are asked to discuss the meaning of inclusive housing and ask fundamental questions: how can housing projects adequately deal with human diversity? Where are the opportunities and limits for inclusion in unit-design, building-design and the neighbourhood context? And how can we find a balance between the needs and constraints? How can we plan for inclusive housing and communities? How do we instill change in the development process? How can we learn from the experts with lived experiences? And what tools and methodologies do we need to learn from the experts with lived experiences?

The Studio will provide a collective research Lab setting to question how “Inclusion can shape home”, a space to explore new ideas and concepts. Our client, the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion, has provided us with two “real” sites and programs for us to test the ideas. The studio is structured in four Loops with weekly invited guests joining for workshops and lectures.

Loop 1 Context mapping and Graphic storytelling (1 week 10%)
Loop 2 Learning from present and past build projects (2 weeks 20%)
Loop 3 Innovation mapping (3 weeks 25%)
Loop 4 Design-and Prototyping (6 weeks 45%)

Graphic by Nord Architects, Denmark