

UserTEC PhD course 29th September to 2th October 2015

In the interest of clarifying communication and sharing knowledge about user practices related to residential energy consumption, the UserTEC research consortium offers a PhD course, the aim of which is to present, clarify and discuss what is known about COMFORT, AUTOMATION, INNOVATION AND DOMESTICATION. The main idea of this course follows from the interdisciplinary approach of the UserTEC project. Thus, we intend to bring together researchers from the social and technical sciences, the humanities and architecture focusing on these core issues, addressing them from each of their respective disciplines. We want the disciplines to engage in each other's perspectives, either to develop interdisciplinary approaches or to strengthen the arguments within each discipline.

A call for your participation

Professors and senior researchers from UserTEC partner Universities, as well as their PhD students who are at an advanced stage in their work, are invited to present their work under one of the abovementioned headlines. PhD's at the early stages of their study can participate without giving presentations. Based on your input, and including our own, we will put a program together.

We thus call for your participation under one of the following headlines:

Comfort

Comfort is associated with a great deal of energy use in buildings. Comfort can be defined in technical terms, which can be measured and related to building technologies; it can be understood as an achievement which people seek to attain; or it can be seen as a socio-technical construction shaped by culture and technology. It is not possible to identify one of these approaches as more correct than the other, though understanding how other scientific communities work on the same concepts might be productive. Comfort can be investigated as variations in practices analysed quantitatively; as routinized habits understood qualitatively in an everyday context: as measured physical conditions, or as technologically modelled scenarios.

Automation

In order to manage and control energy consumption and indoor climate in still more efficient and complex buildings, different types of automation is used. Automation can be understood within a soft cybernetic and learning perspective, based on theory, tools and technique from the field of Human computer Interaction. Or it can be seen from a technological development perspective of what should and could be controlled or automated in what ways. Studies on this could thus include how users understand and live with the automation or it could include studies that are behind new technical developments of automation projects.

Innovation and domestication

New building technologies are developed in laboratories and at architectural firms based on technical understandings, standards and regulations. At the other end of the chain the user moves into the building and appropriate it by making the building into a home, and often this appropriation might take other directions than anticipated by designers. Studies within this approach can deal with either of the end of the innovation-domestication line or it can deal with the relations between the two or the missing relations.

Please send abstracts from both professors and PhD's of no more than 300 words of potential presentations to kgh@sbi.aau.dk before 15th June 2015. PhD's wanting to participate without presentations also please send a notification. UserTEC can cover travel and accommodation for participants from our partner universities.