

From 'Baukultur' to 'Umbaukultur'

From a culture of demolition and replacement
to a culture of care and repair.

Symposium 2026

20th February 2026

13:30–18:30

Accademia di architettura-USI
Foyer Palazzo Canavée, Mendrisio

If you cannot attend in person,
join via Zoom Webinar.
Meeting ID: 678 6626 9027



From 'Baukultur' to 'Umbaukultur'

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The research project "From 'Baukultur' to 'Umbaukultur' – From a Culture of Demolition and Replacement to a Culture of Care and Repair" aims to identify the subconscious cultural and behavioral attitudes that often determine and hinder the successful implementation of conversion projects. We will explore the roots of the prevailing replacement and throwaway culture, its expression in economic fundamentals, legal frameworks, and standards, and we will evaluate the serious negative environmental consequences of this highly unsustainable culture. We want to understand why we consistently fail to do the right thing and how to establish an alternative attitude of care and repair in the building sector.

To explore possible alternatives, the project analyzes how current financial and legal constraints reinforce the replacement culture and how modifying these constraints could open up new future scenarios. This interdisciplinary and cross-cultural research is structured into work packages (WPs), organized into three sections that investigate 'Baukultur' and 'Umbaukultur' across different time periods – Past, Present, and Future – and in three national contexts: Switzerland, Italy, and Germany.

The 2026 Symposium, conceived as an integral part of the research project, will offer a first glimpse at the results of the investigations carried out by the different members of the international project team. It will also provide a platform to discuss these findings with guest speakers, researchers, and students.

"From 'Baukultur' to 'Umbaukultur'" is funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) as part of the National Research Programme NRP 81 "Baukultur". The project is initiated and coordinated at the Professorship for Sustainable Design of Muck Petzet in the Institute for Sustainable Architecture and Technology (IAST) at the Accademia di architettura-USI Mendrisio.

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contacts:

symposium2026-umbau@usi.ch

INTRODUCTION

13:30–13:45 Welcome. Riccardo Blumer (USI-ARC)
Introduction. Muck Petzet (USI-ARC)

PAST

13:45–14:00 History of Throw-away Culture.
Marc Andrew Brightman (UniBo)

14:00–14:15 Replacement culture: what, how much, and why.
Laura Magri (USI-ARC)

14:15–14:45 **Discussion with guests** – moderator Muck Petzet
Marc Andrew Brightman (UniBo), Laura Magri (USI-ARC), Manuel Orazi (USI-ARC), Jonathan Sergison (USI-ARC), Frédéric Bonnet (USI-ARC)

14:45–15:00 Coffee break

PRESENT

15:00–15:15 State of Today: Replacement in Public, Corporate and Private Projects.
Muck Petzet (USI-ARC), Florian Jennewein (Scope Real Estate)

15:15–15:30 Ecological Impacts of Today's Replacement Culture.
Andrea Roscetti and Aramis Vincenzi (USI-ARC)

15:30–15:45 Economic Arguments for a Culture of Care.
Barbara Antonioli Mantegazzini (SUPSI)

15:45–16:15 **Discussion with guests** – moderator Muck Petzet
Klaus Peter Nüesch (Nüesch Development), Andrea Roscetti (USI-ARC), Barbara Antonioli Mantegazzini (SUPSI), Ole Hansen (UCPH), Andrew Clancy (USI-ARC)

16:15–16:30 Coffee break

FUTURE

16:30–16:45 Promising Financial and Legal Frameworks.
Barbara Antonioli Mantegazzini (SUPSI) and Daniele Senzani (UniBo)

16:45–17:00 Teaching Care.
Arianna Frascoli (USI-ARC)

17:00–17:15 Modelling Future Scenarios.
Andrea Rizzoli and Giorgio Corani (SUPSI-IDSIA)

17:15–17:30 Desirable Futures.
Senem Wicki (Kühne Wicki Future Stuff)

17:30–18:00 **Discussion with guests** – moderator Muck Petzet
Daniele Senzani (UniBo), Arianna Frascoli (USI-ARC), Senem Wicki (Kühne Wicki Future Stuff), Andrea Rizzoli (SUPSI-IDSIA), Ivana Stancic (Dark Matter Labs)

18:00–18:30 **Conclusions:** Caspar Schäfer (SNF), Thomas Auer (TU München), Joe Luthiger (NNBS)

18:30 **Aperó**