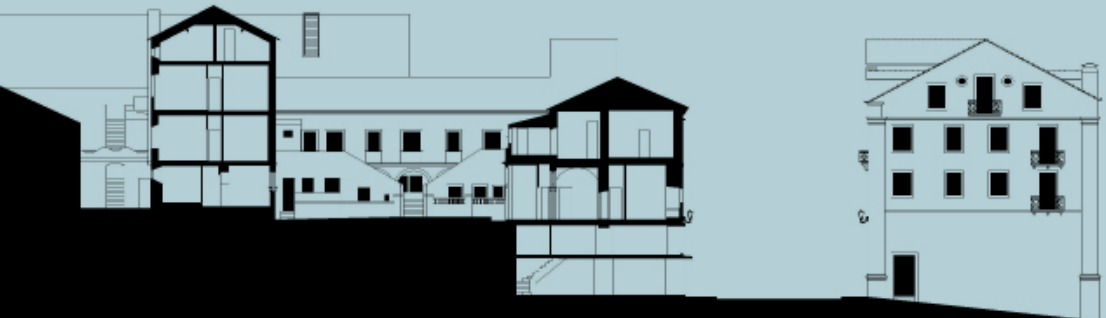


# REUSE OF MATERIAL LANDSCAPES

6–13 JUL  
2026

COIMBRA  
dARQ

CA  
SA



# COIMBRA ARCHITECTURE SUMMER ATELIER

## COORDINATION

Luis Miguel Correia  
Martinho Araújo  
Duarte Miranda

Coimbra Architecture Summer Atelier is an intensive workshop organized by the Department of Architecture of the University of Coimbra, Portugal. Combining practical and theoretical modules, CASA proposes to investigate the built environment from an architectural, urban and social perspective, taking Coimbra as a contemporary artefact of reflection and intervention.

Immersed in an atelier environment under tutor guidance, students and young professionals are challenged to develop design strategies that address proposed cyclical concept themes. A theoretical component is added to this programme through informal sessions and debates, where concepts, ideas and projects are discussed so as to stimulate the design process.

CASA provides a *forum* for architectural experiment, the lively exchange of ideas, sharing of knowledge and promoting of a cultural space. Participants will find here a dynamic and interdisciplinary space for interaction with dedicated professionals of contemporary architectural practice, as well as renowned academics committed to teaching and research in this field.

Embracing diverse nationalities, cultures and learning processes, CASA intends to promote the exchange of practices, experiences, and ideas across generations, having as its main goal the creation of innovative design proposals for Coimbra.

# CASA

## CASA 2026

# REUSE OF MATERIAL LANDSCAPES

Paulo Providência  
Armando Rabaça

Recent global environmental warnings, such as climate extremes and their consequences (floods, fires, heat waves, storms, tidal surges), have raised urgent concern regarding the relationship between architecture and its physical surroundings. New attention to the impermeability of surfaces, the reflectance of materials, and the environmental sustainability of building materials is now required in architectural design practices, along with material recycling, the reuse of built structures, and other strategies that allow for the reduction of the environmental impact of buildings and architecture. While the reuse of architecture, including that with heritage value, is already consensually considered a subject of study and research, the specific relationships between buildings and their immediate surroundings, implying an understanding of the environmental implications of the former, are still in their infancy. In this field, the relationship between heritage buildings and complex topographies, precisely those where the relationship between architecture and the environment is heightened, emerges as a vast field of learning – not only through the understanding of the diachronic processes of adaptation of the building to the environment, but also through the lessons that buildings of the past embody, the knowledge of which can be deeply useful in contemporary circumstances.

The traditional settlement of Portuguese cities on the slopes of hillsides is nothing new, seeking to balance the attractive proximity to riverside areas with the security afforded by higher altitudes; this condition progresses towards the summits, asserting territorial

dominance. Such complex topographies tend to have strong consequences in architectural design, generating particular typological and topological solutions. Moreover, architectural interventions often extend beyond the building. Waterways, but also retaining walls, infiltration zones alternating with paved areas, supporting and leveling systems, articulated with serendipity access roads and paths, draining devices and systems of water collection, deal with the specificity of the topography and natural resources, such as natural waterlines, partaking of the architectural strategy and generating dialogues with nature. These are elements that share the architectural richness generated by the topographies of Portuguese cities, which have always contributed to a spatial sensitivity and exploration based on a tectonic and technological mastery of their architecture. Thus, architecture and topographical context, in a process of primarily landscape dominance, constitute a highly topical theme in architecture. The natural and the manmade become inextricably linked in complex layered edifices of hidden and visible structures, particularly in porous undergrounds such as Coimbra's karstic region, forming what can be termed as material landscape. Walter Benjamin's words about Naples come to mind: "Building and action interpenetrate in the courtyards, arcades, and stairways. In everything, they preserve the scope to become a theatre of new, unforeseen constellations".<sup>1</sup>

In such a comprehensive understanding of architecture as material landscape, an interdisciplinary area of study emerges that combines an urgent and up-to-date reading on the environmental implications of these topographies, involving landscape architecture, architecture, archaeology, geology, and the anthropology of space. Architectural reuse becomes an interdisciplinary task in which the environmental and ecological implications meet material culture and heritage.

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1 Walter Benjamin, "Naples", in Walter Benjamin, *Selected Writings*, vol. 1, 1913-1926, ed. Marcus Bullock and Michael w. Jennings (Cambridge, Mass. London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996), 416.

## DESIGN TOOLS

Coimbra is a paradigmatic case of this intermingling of the natural and the manmade. The geographical and topographical reality of the region generates rich, demanding relationships between architecture and its surroundings. The eighteenth-century Joanine Library and the Roman cryptoporticus of the Aeminium forum are major examples. Starting from three other case studies of topographical complexity, this workshop aims at studying the interdisciplinary dimensions of their material landscapes. Rather than developing design proposals or intervention ideas in such an extremely short period of time, the goal is to reflect on the design tools through which to generate and express knowledge of the complex links between building and site, namely Layering Topographies, Mapping Territories and Drawing Sections. These tools are already projects in the making, broadening the concept of James Corner in "the agency of mapping" to layering and sections drawing<sup>2</sup>.

Mapping Territories deals with the cognition and representation of the specificities of the material landscapes, identifying biodiversity, from endogenous to cultivated flora, fauna and economic activities such as agriculture, as well as architectural structures, art works and archaeological remains.

Layering Topographies concerns the analysis and representation of the several layers that construct the architectural and natural structures, be them temporal (chronologies of construction, transformations and adaptations, starting from geological layers and early constructions to the present state) be them physical and spatial, which may involve issues of program, typology and function, as well as of materials and building systems.

Drawing Sections explores the specificity of the cross section as a tool to comprehend and represent the physical reality of the intersections between the natural

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2 James Corner, "The agency of mapping: speculation, critique and invention", in Denis Cosgrove, ed., *Mappings* (London, Reaktion books, 1999), 213-252.

and the manmade in these material landscapes, putting in evidence the links between the hidden and the visible structures, such as geological strata, groundwater levels and courses, alluvial areas, retaining walls, water channels and wells.

The aim is to explore these design tools to produce a graphic synthesis of each of the material landscapes of the three case studies, the Bissaya Barreto Maternity, the Colégio do Espírito Santo and Conimbriga's Casa dos Repuxos. Graphic techniques must be based on hand drawing and explore graphic expression to construct and communicate an interpretative understanding of these material landscapes.

It is possible to identify and explore diverse and complementary relationships between landscape, topography and heritage reuse in each of these case studies, allowing for the testing of various interpretations of the variables present. In the first case, the maternity hospital, the dispersed buildings create permeable areas with strong environmental potential; in the second case, a school-block building incorporates decompression areas such as two cloister courtyards into its topographical context and built compactness; in the third case, the archaeological stratification provides special attention to the interpretation of diachronic topographical variations and their environmental implications.

Combining studies of architecture and material culture with landscape studies, the workshop brings the operator's experience and knowledge to the theoretical reflection on architectural design, particularly in what concerns the debate on the topics of reading, reusing and transforming. It does so by focusing on the role of the environment and topography of insertion in the debate on the reuse of architectural, urban and archaeological heritage.

## CASE STUDIES

### **Maternidade Bissaya Barreto**

The Bissaya Barreto Maternity Hospital, built in Quinta da Rainha, is a health equipment that is to be deactivated. A comprehensive program, comprising obstetric consultation offices, a kindergarten, a nursery for legal protection of infancy, as well as the maternity hospital facilities and the accommodations of a school of social workers and nurses of maternal health, is disposed in a sloping area of a valley, establishing a hierarchy that enhances the programs of major public presence and preserves the privacy of those requiring seclusion. The volumetric dispersion is justified by the complexity of the program, as by the residential area around the facilities, minimizing the volumetric impact and the physical presence of the institution. It is precisely this scattering of small buildings that fosters the intricate relations between built volumes and strongly characterized outer spaces, where one can find several water elements such as swimming pools for children, water surfaces, either separating the maternal hospital from the accommodations of the school of social workers and nurses, or the administrative facilities from the obstetric consultation offices and the nursery. Although these spaces are currently deactivated, their relations with D. João III high school upwards in the valley, the stairs giving access to it and the vegetation along the slope allow a comprehensive environmental and landscape interpretation of the whole valley and of its heritage value, providing a new attention to the importance and potentials of the reuse of the health facilities based on this worth preserving, comprehensive environment. A reflection on the possibilities of reuse of the ensemble of buildings and outer spaces with a singular, unrepeatable program is therefore to be done. Can the specificity of

the program, with all its potential, be considered in the strategy of the reuse? Or, on the contrary, the points of departure must be solely the physical characteristics, the important relation of contextual scales and the significant iconography, so intentionally conceived for the program?

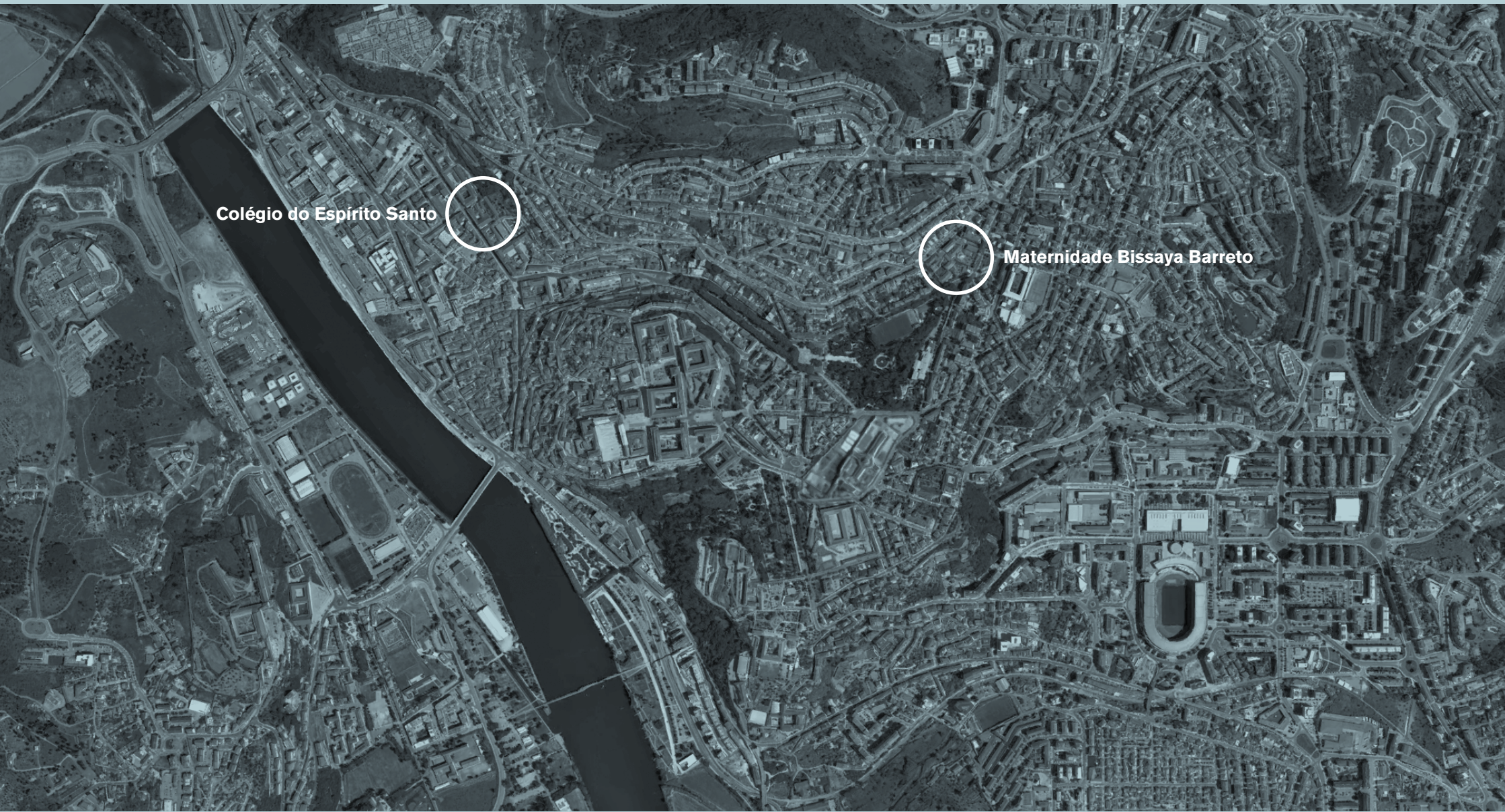
### **Colégio do Espírito Santo**

The Colégio do Espírito Santo, a university building belonging to the sixteenth-century plan for Rua da Sofia (Sofia street), included in the classification of a set of buildings by the Unesco World Heritage, has been occupied, divided and transformed into collective housing. Nevertheless, it has maintained several architectural and ornamental elements of its previous existence, the old structure being self-evident in the unplanned, spontaneous reuse of the new program. The topographical insertion of the building, between Rua da Sofia, in the plain of the Mondego river, and the Montarroio hill, results in a succession of plateaus at different levels, following the hill slope. The cloister courtyards, partially enclosed by the housing occupation, together with the narrow street to the east—Azinha do Carmo—which gives access to the rear before developing upwards, are fundamental elements of the topographical articulation. The recovery of vegetation ecosystems, the channeling and collecting of rainwater in retention gardens and the landscape relationships between different levels, from new paths to old, abandoned tracks, constitute subjects of identification and study to be mapped, layered and thought of in conjunction with the recent theater built facility and the path linking the college to the Pátio da Inquisição courtyard.

### **Casa dos Repuxos**

The case of the archaeological remains of Casa dos Repuxos (Fountains villa), in the archaeological site of Conimbriga, offers a trace of material culture suspended in time. Is it possible to equate a cultural reuse that goes beyond museography, with its characteristic didactic roles and purposes of touristic fruition?

The villa is an exceptional example of a Roman domus with a peristyle that assumes an exemplary environmental protagonism. It has been the subject of a strong intervention of museography, including the construction of a roof cover for the protection of its mosaics. Its enigmatic location, adjacent to the late-imperial wall of the city, is now being object of further investigation. Extensive and important excavations are currently providing a deeper comprehension of the two floors of the domus. These are also revealing the foundations of Conimbriga's aqueduct and the insertion of the city in the valley to the east, contiguous with the location of the theatre and the circus. The singular environmental insertion of this domus, with the topographical relations that provides us with an understanding of the important elements of water that fed the fountains of the villa's peristyle and surrounded the triclinium, provides a basis to think of the complex topography and the relation between architecture and environment in the beginnings of civilization. Supporting walls, systems of water collection, retention ponds, porosities of the systems, relations with greenery and biodiversity, excavations and embankments; a world of complex operations, often completely hidden, constitute the substrate that allows for a harmonious relation between natural and the manmade in areas of complex topographies. Taking into account the karstic nature of the area, water circuits are a particular subject of architectural and landscape investigation.



Colégio do Espírito Santo

Maternidade Bissaya Barreto



Casa dos Repuxos

# CASA

**6–13 JULY  
2026  
dARQ  
Coimbra**

## ATELIER TUTORS

**Elizabeth Hatz | Catarina Ribeiro  
Philip Christou | Luís Sobral  
Diogo Lopes | Fanny Noël**

## SESSION LECTURERS

**Carolina Brasileiro  
Rui Lobo  
Virgílio Hipólito Correia**

## CALENDAR

### 6 MON

09:00 Participants welcome  
and briefing with CASA team  
09:15 Opening Session CASA 2026  
with Scientific Coordination  
(Paulo Providência  
and Armando Rabaça)  
09:30 Session with site researchers  
09:30 Carolina Brasileiro  
10:30 Rui Lobo  
11:30 Virgílio Hipólito Correia  
14:30 Group meetings for the  
preparation of the site visits  
18:00 Paulo Providência:  
*Presentation of the project for the  
archeological museum of Conímbriga*

### 7 TUE

09:00 Site visits with  
Catarina Raposo and Duarte Miranda  
09:15 Maternidade Bissaya Barreto  
11:15 Colégio do Espírito Santo  
14:00 Trip to Conímbriga  
18:00 Session #1 with Atelier Tutor  
Philip Christou

### 8 WED

Working phase 1 – analysis  
and data selection  
09:00 Workshop  
14:00 Workshop  
18:00 Session #2 with Atelier Tutor  
Elizabeth Hatz

### 9 THU

09:00 Workshop  
14:30 Workshop  
18:00 Session #3 with Atelier Tutor  
Diogo Fonseca Lopes

### 10 FRI

09:00 Workshop  
14:00 Workshop  
16:30 Intermediate group  
presentations

### 11 SAT

Working phase 2 – drawing  
synthesis  
09:00 Workshop  
14:00 Workshop

### 12 SUN

09:00 Workshop  
14:00 Workshop

### 13 MON

09:00 Workshop  
14:30 Final presentations  
with guest critics Teresa Alfaiate  
18:00 Workshop closing  
and diploma ceremony  
20:00 Closing apéro

## FEES

The fee for attending the summer atelier is 25€.

### The fee includes:

- Intensive participation in a 8 day workshop and sessions;
- Closing dinner;
- Studio material and printing expenses;
- 24/7 studio access;
- Student kits (dARQ books, CASA booklet and credentials, notebook and pen, map of Coimbra);
- Certificate of participation.

### The fee does not include:

- Travel expenses to and from Coimbra;
- Meals and accommodation;
- Local transportation outside of studio working hours or CASA programme.

## APPLICATION PROCEDURE

To apply, please access the following link:

[www.uc.pt/fctuc/darq/casa/](http://www.uc.pt/fctuc/darq/casa/)

The filled application form should be sent to: [coimbratelier.apply@uc.pt](mailto:coimbratelier.apply@uc.pt)  
The deadline for applications is 29/06/2026.

CASA 2026 has a limited number of places available, the enrollment procedure will close once 30 applications are confirmed. Payment of the course fee will only be requested after the application is reviewed and considered eligible for participation. This can take up to one week, depending on the number of applicants.

If the application is successful, CASA team will send a confirmation email along with payment details and other information. Each applicant has a period of seven days to pay the participation fee once the confirmation email is sent. Registration will only be valid after payment confirmation.

### Cancellation policy:

If the cancellation request is sent before 29<sup>th</sup> of June, half of the participation fee will be refunded. Applications cancelled after this date will not be refunded.

## DISCLAIMER

Each participant is responsible for ensuring that they have a safe stay in Portugal and should arrange their own travel and health insurance. CASA team is not responsible for any type of accident or damage, property or healthwise, that may happen during the workshop.

## USEFUL INFORMATION

The city center of Coimbra, where the University is located, is a dynamic and diverse area with numerous restaurants, bars and accommodation possibilities, such as hostels, guesthouses and more, all with an affordable pricing.

## USEFUL WEBSITES

- [www.uc.pt/en/fctuc/darq/](http://www.uc.pt/en/fctuc/darq/)
- [www.uc.pt/en](http://www.uc.pt/en)
- [worldheritage.uc.pt/](http://worldheritage.uc.pt/)
- [www.lonelyplanet.com/portugal/central-portugal/coimbra](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/portugal/central-portugal/coimbra)
- [visit.uc.pt/en/about/](http://visit.uc.pt/en/about/)

## FAQS

### Where will the workshop take place?

CASA will be held at the College of Jesus and New Cathedral.

Address:

Colégio de Jesus  
Rua Inácio Duarte, 65  
3000-481 Coimbra

### In which language will the workshop be held?

Both the workshops and sessions will be held in english. CASA team does not require participants to present a language certificate, however, we strongly recommend a good level of fluency.

### Are there any specific requirements for participation?

CASA mainly aims to architecture and urban planning students or recent graduates. A strong command of both hand drawing and computer drawing skills is advised.

### Do I need to bring my laptop?

Each participant should bring their own laptop. Drawing paper, cutting tools, rulers and other supplies will be provided. Nevertheless, we encourage each participant to bring their own drawing materials, such as pencils, pens and others.

### Will I be granted a diploma/certificate of participation?

Upon successful conclusion of the workshop every participant will be given an official diploma of participation signed by the CASA representative and the Department of Architecture director.

### How will I get notified if my application is successful?

CASA team will send a confirmation email informing each applicant whether his application was successful or not.

### Will there be access to wifi?

During their time in the Department of Architecture, participants will have free access to Wi-Fi provided by the University server.

### When is payment due?

The applicant will be asked to pay for the course fee once his application is confirmed and accepted, this is done via email, where payment instructions are also sent. Registration will only be valid after payment confirmation. Payment deadline is 29/06/2026; Applications submitted in the 29<sup>th</sup> of June will have extra time for payment. The application form should be filled and sent to CASA: [coimbratelier.apply@uc.pt](mailto:coimbratelier.apply@uc.pt)

### Will CASA be responsible for issuing my VISA?

Each participant is responsible for obtaining their own VISA. For invitation letter purposes, please inform the team during your application procedure.

**coimbratelier@uc.pt**  
**uc.pt/fctuc/darq/casa/casa-2026**

**f** coimbratelier  
**@coimbratelier**

SCIENTIFIC COORDINATION

**Paulo Providência**  
**Armando Rabaça**

TEAM AND COORDINATION

**Luís Miguel Correia**  
**Martinho Araújo**  
**Duarte Miranda**

ORGANIZATION



UNIVERSIDADE DE  
COIMBRA

DARQ

Departamento de Arquitetura  
Faculdade de Ciências e Tecnologia,  
Universidade de Coimbra

PARTNERS



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