

The future of the Profession: Empowering the Next Generation in Participatory Urban Design

International single stage open ideas
competition
for young architects

Jury report



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I. INTRODUCTION

I.1 General Information

The International Ideas Competition titled The future of the Profession - Empowering the Next Generation in Participatory Urban Design focuses on the critical challenges faced by World Heritage sites in urban contexts around the world.

This initiative invited young architects globally to get engaged with this heritage and propose innovative solutions that address contemporary issues while contributing to the broader goals of heritage conservation and sustainable urban development.

Participants were encouraged to reflect on pertinent issues that extend beyond construction and propose innovative visions for a new visitor centre to a World I Heritage site of their choosing, situated within an urban context. In doing so, they should address site-specific challenges and align their proposals with the site's objectives.

The future of the Profession - Empowering the Next Generation in Participatory Urban Design aligns with collateral event of the 19th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia: Deep Surface: Architecture to enhance the experience of UNESCO designated sites, organised by UNESCO in collaboration with The Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU). The exhibition will take place within the premises of the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe (Venice, Italy) from 10 May to 23 November 2025, It also aligns with the theme of the UN-Habitat World Architecture Day 2024, Empowering the Next Generation in Participatory Urban Design.

I.2 The goals of the project

The Future of the Profession - Empowering the Next Generation in Participatory Urban Design International Ideas Competition targets the younger generation of architects worldwide. It invites them to envisage innovative solutions that, through context-sensitive, site-specific strategies, address local challenges while contributing to our shared cultural heritage.

World Heritage Sites around the world face a wide range of complex challenges, such negative impact of infrastructure or building encroachment, tourism pressure, inaccurate or inappropriate interpretation, natural disasters and climate change, and other site-specific challenges , which can strain not only the site but also the local populations and communities.

Visitor centres in World Heritage sites can play a crucial role in addressing these challenges and advancing to the sites' objectives. When appropriately designed, inspired by sustainable values, and integrated into site management systems, by leveraging the natural, cultural, and collective 'inherent intelligence' of locations, visitor centres can contribute to heritage conservation and management through a people-centred approach.

A "visitor centre" is defined as any physical facility within a site management system that facilitates the presentation, interpretation, access, and sustainable visitation of World Heritage sites. These centres may take various forms and names, such as "site museums," "interpretation centres," "information centres," "community centres," "houses," or "gateways," but they all share similar purposes.

All submitted proposals will be showcased online on the UIA website. The five winning proposals will also be displayed at Palazzo Zorzi, location of UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, located at Rio de S. Severo, 30100 Venice VE, Italy from 8 to 15 May 2025.

The exhibition's opening and the awards ceremony are scheduled to take place on 7 May 2025 at the same venue.

I.3 Evaluation criteria

Submissions were assessed solely on the following criteria:

- Compliance with the competition goals
- Urban and architectural design
- Social Impact
- Sustainability
- Contribution to improved Site Management
- Coherence of overall concept

I.4 Legal Framework

This international single-stage ideas competition for young architects was organised by the UIA and conducted in accordance with UNESCO Standard Regulations for International Competitions in Architecture and Town planning and the UIA best practice recommendations (see UIA Competition Guide for Design Competitions in Architecture and Related Fields) and has been reviewed by the International Competitions Consultancy Board (ICC)
<http://www.uia-architectes.org>

I.5 Qualification requirements

The competition was open to young architects (individual or in teams) from all over the world. Eligible architects must be qualified for the use of title and practice in their country of origin or residence. All participants must have been born on or after 1 January 1989.

I.5 Technical Committee

UIA Council Members Daniel Fügenschuh (Austria), Lilia Cannarella (Italy) and Teresa Táboas (Spain) served as the Technical Committee for the Competition.
The Professional Advisor for this Competition was Lillia Cannarella (Italy).

I.6 International Jury

Cristóbal Tirado,	Architect, Chile - President of the Jury
Manuel Herrero Sánchez,	Architect, Spain - Vice-President of the Jury
Magdalena Landry,	Director UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, Poland – Jury Member
Đoàn Thanh Hà,	Architect, Vietnam – Jury Member
Omar Degan,	Architect Somalia – Jury Member
Giacomo Ardesio,	Architect, Italy – Alternate Jury Member



Cristóbal Tirado



Manuel Herrero Sánchez



Magdalena Landry



Đoàn Thanh Hà



Omar Degan



Giacomo Ardesio

II.1 Evaluation process

The jury convened via interactive video conference to review and deliberate on all entries. The jury sessions took place on March 27, 28, 29, April 8 and 9. All entries were considered anonymously.

Prior to the jury's sessions, the submissions were examined by the Technical Committee in regard to formal aspects.

The Technical Committee verified if any entries were submitted after the deadline or failed to adhere to anonymity requirements. At this stage it was confirmed that all entries comply with the set deadline (5PM CET – Paris). Entries not complying with anonymity requirements and not complying with the request for one panel were excluded. One entry consisting of an empty format was also excluded.

- 67c88c48478dd
- 67c981b597d4e
- 5
- 8
- 29
- 52

Furthermore, the Technical Committee verified the entries according to the submission requirements listed in Chapter II/ 12 Submission requirements and deliverables and Chapter II/ 2 Official Language, of the Competition Brief. The results of this verification were presented to the Jury prior to starting to examine and evaluate the competition entries.

The jury took note of the report of the technical committee and its remarks on each project.

The jury decided which entries could be evaluated on the basis of the submitted material presentations and which ones had to be excluded.

Final list of accepted entries is as follows:

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| • 002_67851f3797913 | • 063_67caa4cef08b3 | • 114_67c22fb651fa7 |
| • 006_679540824d3d5 | • 064_67803f9702cc9 | • 115_67b690af42157 |
| • 007_677df3a31cee3 | • 065_6784d18f6829f | • 116_67c5c4da76851 |
| • 009_677ed50c88ebd | • 066_67c9a6f43cdf7 | • 117_67c9853556f8a |
| • 010_67c03bb0a76b6 | • 067_67bedadd24474 | • 118_67cae83a3422f |
| • 011_67910b14c1300 | • 068_67cadce78a55e | • 119_67bca21d9fd20 |
| • 012_67938edfa91dd | • 069_67cae516648ef | • 120_67ca17d642129 |
| • 013_67be171f6f606 | • 070_67c9c77eadbee | • 121_67cb14e2159d2 |
| • 014_677ed6585834f | • 071_67c9923b92b0e | • 122_67ca844e2dc29 |
| • 015_67b5d6be7ad81 | • 072_67cae0a92e124 | • 123_67b84eb807895 |
| • 016_67852372de19f | • 073_67c99492f1ce8 | • 124_67c7e1024d764 |
| • 017_67c6ec15b5c3e | • 074_67ca4280520d7 | • 126_67cabd704ef05 |
| • 018_67c8241f10936 | • 075_67b3608cccebd | • 128_67c8739e34dc9 |
| • 019_6797d72b47992 | • 076_67802996453a6 | • 129_67cab4d1a68f |
| • 020_67c8c04c3e61b | • 077_67a5286b12b22 | • 130_67bc5f9624d2b |
| • 021_67a22b9b66c7a | • 079_67ca97eb2a929 | • 131_67bf5dd0666ef |
| • 022_67b88d98a84ed | • 080_67c7d45984af3 | • 132_67bfd7204af64 |
| • 023_67c6e4f21a7dd | • 081_67ae08857e88a | • 133_67ac91205f23f |
| • 024_677eef84da72b | • 082_678d1b407fda4 | • 134_67a9c258834fd |
| • 025_67c99dd06657f | • 083_67caf792af9a1 | • 136_67ca79312f354 |
| • 027_67c1e38515a52 | • 084_67b69908b4c8a | • 137_67c29ba862170 |
| • 028_67c9aa9980d13 | • 085_67c973a3007b8 | • 138_67ca04a63f981 |
| • 030_6786731dbc001 | • 086_67c70673aa02f | • 140_67c9d09663a90 |
| • 033_67B5FB28D7CD9 | • 087_67ca342f48b43 | |
| • 034_67bd8e203d160 | • 088_67c8dcb88521c | |
| • 035_67aa79a39c139 | • 089_67814de3a6f4b | |
| • 037_679a30e6b34a3 | • 090_67ca3daf6e1db | |
| • 038_67c9682d13be6 | • 091_67ca28b529110 | |
| • 039_67c4b4deeb755 | • 092_67c717e498de0 | |
| • 041_6799410d571f2 | • 093_67c93f69713e3 | |
| • 042_67ca36fa4d37f | • 094_67cadf98a7b3e | |
| • 043_67815c11a10dd | • 095_67c9a4e677f69 | |
| • 044_67ca3c991a8e8 | • 096_67847bdb1b829 | |
| • 045_67ca297eb51f1 | • 097_67cafa7f8e82d | |
| • 046_67be1b9b30195 | • 098_67be3ce67a9ea | |
| • 047_67be367ec65a4 | • 099_678df63a03fed | |
| • 049_67902c18eb444 | • 100_67c9805cd5b9f | |
| • 050_67ca6e5a13bdd | • 102_67c1b3f5dce62 | |
| • 053_67bc302e1e51f | • 103_67800e8422ade | |
| • 054_67814dc7d6605 | • 105_67c9e65fbb00b | |
| • 055_67c5d760038c9 | • 106_67a49e48346fd | |
| • 056_67c904467b91a | • 107_67ca9cd7d9264 | |
| • 057_67c99f496ee5b | • 108_67cae468c76f8 | |
| • 058_67aa4e392298f | • 109_67cacae6bae98 | |
| • 059_67c994a62cd9a | • 110_67c7599e30013 | |
| • 060_67c9cd2a659dc | • 111_67bcb057cd86 | |
| • 061_6782b2828a7bd | • 112_67cadf010bc50 | |
| • 062_67c18dd723e38 | • 113_678da9d895143 | |

The jury examined all projects according to the evaluation criteria set in the brief. The jury worked as one undivided group. The evaluation of all projects was done with the contribution of all jurors in the first two sessions and the fourth. Five jury members participated on the third and fifth sessions.

The evaluation process was conducted with successive evaluation rounds dismissing each time the less good proposal in order to identify the shortlisted projects which were analysed and discussed thoroughly. All projects were considered anonymously.

II.2 First Round

In the first round 70 entries were dismissed for one, more or all the following reasons:

- failing to comply with the competition goals
- inadequate urban integration
- missing architectural quality

The following proposals were dismissed at the first evaluation round:

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| • 002_67851f3797913 | • 089_67814de3a6f4b |
| • 006_679540824d3d5 | • 092_67c717e498de0 |
| • 009_677ed50c88ebd | • 094_67cadf98a7b3e |
| • 011_67910b14c1300 | • 098_67be3ce67a9ea |
| • 015_67b5d6be7ad81 | • 099_678df63a03fed |
| • 017_67c6ec15b5c3e | • 100_67c9805cd5b9f |
| • 018_67c8241f10936 | • 103_67800e8422ade |
| • 020_67c8c04c3e61b | • 106_67a49e48346fd |
| • 021_67a22b9b66c7a | • 107_67ca9cd7d9264 |
| • 022_67b88d98a84ed | • 108_67cae468c76f8 |
| • 023_67c6e4f21a7dd | • 109_67cacae6bae98 |
| • 024_677eef84da72b | • 112_67cadf010bc50 |
| • 025_67c99dd06657f | • 113_678da9d895143 |
| • 034_67bd8e203d160 | • 114_67c22fb651fa7 |
| • 037_679a30e6b34a3 | • 115_67b690af42157 |
| • 039_67c4b4deeb755 | • 116_67c5c4da76851 |
| • 042_67ca36fa4d37f | • 117_67c9853556f8a |
| • 044_67ca3c991a8e8 | • 118_67cae83a3422f |
| • 047_67be367ec65a4 | • 119_67bca21d9fd20 * |
| • 049_67902c18eb444 | • 121_67cb14e2159d2 |
| • 050_67ca6e5a13bdd | • 122_67ca844e2dc29 |
| • 057_67c99f496ee5b | • 123_67b84eb807895 |
| • 058_67aa4e392298f | • 124_67c7e1024d764 |
| • 059_67c994a62cd9a | • 126_67cabd704ef05 |
| • 060_67c9cd2a659dc | • 128_67c8739e34dc9 |
| • 063_67caa4cef08b3 | • 130_67bc5f9624d2b |
| • 067_67bedadd24474 | • 131_67bf5dd0666ef |
| • 068_67cadce78a55e | • 132_67bfd7204af64 |
| • 070_67c9c77eadbee | • 133_67ac91205f23f |
| • 071_67c9923b92b0e | • 134_67a9c258834fd |
| • 074_67ca4280520d7 | • 136_67ca79312f354 |
| • 075_67b3608cccebd | • 140_67c9d09663a90 |
| • 076_67802996453a6 | |
| • 079_67ca97eb2a929 | |
| • 082_678d1b407fda4 | |
| • 083_67caf792af9a1 | |
| • 085_67c973a3007b8 | |
| • 087_67ca342f48b43 | |

* position after confirmation round.

II.3 Second Round

In the second round 29 proposals were dismissed for one, more or all the following reasons:

- limited integration to the site
- limited architectural quality
- sustainability aspects
- no contribution to improved site management

Following projects were dismissed at the second evaluation round:

- 007_677df3a31cee3
- 012_67938edfa91dd
- 014_677ed6585834f
- 027_67c1e38515a52
- 030_6786731dbc001
- 033_67B5FB28D7CD9
- 035_67aa79a39c139
- 038_67c9682d13be6
- 043_67815c11a10dd
- 046_67be1b9b30195
- 055_67c5d760038c9
- 062_67c18dd723e38
- 064_67803f9702cc9
- 065_6784d18f6829f
- 066_67c9a6f43cdf7
- 072_67cae0a92e124
- 081_67ae08857e88a
- 086_67c70673aa02f
- 088_67c8dcb88521c
- 090_67ca3daf6e1db
- 093_67c93f69713e3
- 095_67c9a4e677f69
- 097_67cafa7f8e82d
- 105_67c9e65fbb00b
- 110_67c7599e30013
- 111_67bcb057cd86
- 120_67ca17d642129
- 129_67cab04d1a68f
- 137_67c29ba862170

II.4 Third Round

In the third round 7 proposals were dismissed for one, more or all the following reasons:

- Failing to fully comply with the competition goals
- Not strengthening the site's identity
- Limited social impact

Following proposals were dismissed at the third evaluation round:

- 013_67be171f6f606
- 019_6797d72b47992
- 028_67c9aa9980d13
- 045_67ca297eb51f1
- 091_67ca28b529110
- 096_67847bdb1b829
- 138_67ca04a63f981*

II.5 Confirmation Round

Before discussing the shortlisted projects, the jury undertook a control round and made some minor readjustments of classification, the results of which are integrated in the previous descriptions.

Jury members were given the opportunity to analyse individually all the entries admitted to round 1 and to make sure that no good project was unjustly dismissed in the previous rounds. In result of this examination the Jury decided to move the following entries to lower rounds:

- Entry 119_67bca21d9fd20
- Entry 138_67ca04a63f981

Entry 119_67bca21d9fd20 was rounded down as the jury found that it did not present a distinctly original proposal and innovative solution. As a result, it was moved to Round 1.

Entry 138_67ca04a63f981 was rounded down as the jury found that the proposal offered a series of pavilions and did not fully complied with the competition goals. As a result it was moved to Round 3.

The following 15 entries were then confirmed as shortlisted:

- 010_67c03bb0a76b6
- 016_67852372de19f
- 028_67c9aa9980d13
- 046_67be1b9b30195
- 053_67bc302e1e51f
- 054_67814dc7d6605
- 056_67c904467b91a
- 061_6782b2828a7bd
- 069_67cae516648ef
- 073_67c99492f1ce8
- 077_67a5286b12b22
- 080_67c7d45984af3
- 084_67b69908b4c8a
- 102_67c1b3f5dce62
- 110_67c7599e30013

II.6 Shortlisted proposals

The 15 shortlisted projects were thoroughly analysed and the jury discussed the qualities of the shortlisted projects in respect to the criteria set in the brief.

The jury then classified the shortlisted projects in two groups:

Middle group 6 proposals:

- 046_67be1b9b30195
- 069_67cae516648ef
- 077_67a5286b12b22
- 080_67c7d45984af3
- 102_67c1b3f5dce62
- 110_67c7599e30013

Upper group 9 proposals:

- 010_67c03bb0a76b6
- 016_67852372de19f
- 028_67c9aa9980d13
- 053_67bc302e1e51f
- 054_67814dc7d6605
- 056_67c904467b91a
- 061_6782b2828a7bd
- 073_67c99492f1ce8
- 084_67b69908b4c8a

Then the jury ranked the shortlisted proposals in the upper group and allocated the five prizes and decided to give four honourable mentions.

First Prize:	073_67c99492f1ce8
Second Prize:	084_67b69908b4c8a
Third Prize:	016_67852372de19f
Fourth Prize:	010_67c03bb0a76b6
Fifth Prize:	056_67c904467b91a

Honourable mentions:

028_67c9aa9980d13
053_67bc302e1e51f
054_67814dc7d6605
061_6782b2828a7bd

The ranking list was approved and signed by the jury.

The jury was divided in two groups. One was assigned to write the critics of the 5 prizes and the honourable mentions while other to write the general remarks.

The critics were discussed and approved by the jury. They are included with the documentation of the projects.

The identity of the authors was disclosed after the allocation of the awards and honourable mentions.

II.7 Prizes and mentions

The total prize money available was € 15.000.

Five prizes were, as announced in the brief, attributed by the jury.

The following sums will be paid to the competition prize winners:

1st prize:	€ 5.000
2nd prize:	€ 4.000
3rd prize:	€ 3.000
4th prize:	€ 2.000
5th prize:	€ 1.000

Winners and competitors awarded an Honourable Mention received a certificate.

III. GENERAL REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JURY

The Jury would like to express its appreciation to the International Union of Architects (UIA) for launching an open international competition, thereby enabling young architects from all countries and regions to contribute to a shared reflection on the future of heritage. This initiative ensured a diversity of voices and visions that enriched the evaluation process and affirmed architecture's critical role in shaping the cultural relevance and accessibility of World Heritage sites around the world.

Visitor centres within World Heritage sites have the potential to address complex challenges while supporting the broader objectives of heritage preservation. By drawing on the natural, cultural and social intelligence embedded in each place, they can contribute to site management and conservation through approaches that prioritise local context and human experience. The Jury ensured that these criteria were adequately addressed in the proposed projects.

In this context, the Jury also extends its thanks to all competitors. The effort, visions and hard work demonstrated through the proposals is commendable, and in some cases reflect a remarkable level of engagement reflection and sensitivity. Participants not only responded to the specificities of place but often ventured to question, expand and redefine the notion of what a visitor centre might be in the context of World Heritage. Several moved away from the idea of a single iconic building and instead embraced more situated, distributed, or even intangible approaches. These alternative interpretations proposed visitor experiences grounded in participation and storytelling rather than static displays or dominant architectural gestures.

Throughout the competition, many proposals thoughtfully addressed the specific challenges encountered by World Heritage sites. Issues such as over-tourism, environmental risk, local disengagement and the pressures of urban development were addressed through a variety of strategies: some protective and conservative, others transformative and imaginative. In some cases, proposals were not limited to spatial solutions; they included programmatic and operational ideas intended to strengthen site management and reinforce the link between heritage and community.

The diversity of the competition sites — spanning across different continents, cultures, scales and levels of visibility — posed a considerable challenge to the Jury. Yet it also became a strength. The variety demanded a high degree of openness and adaptability in the evaluation process, encouraging careful reading and nuanced debate. This dynamic exchange of perspectives within the Jury was central to reaching a consensus. The group engaged in a productive discussion around questions of context, narrative, feasibility, and ethics.

The result is a selection that does not privilege a single architectural approach but instead celebrates plurality—plurality of site, of voice, of process. Above all, the Jury recognises the importance of an architecture that reflects on the site, and that chooses its gestures carefully in relation to place.

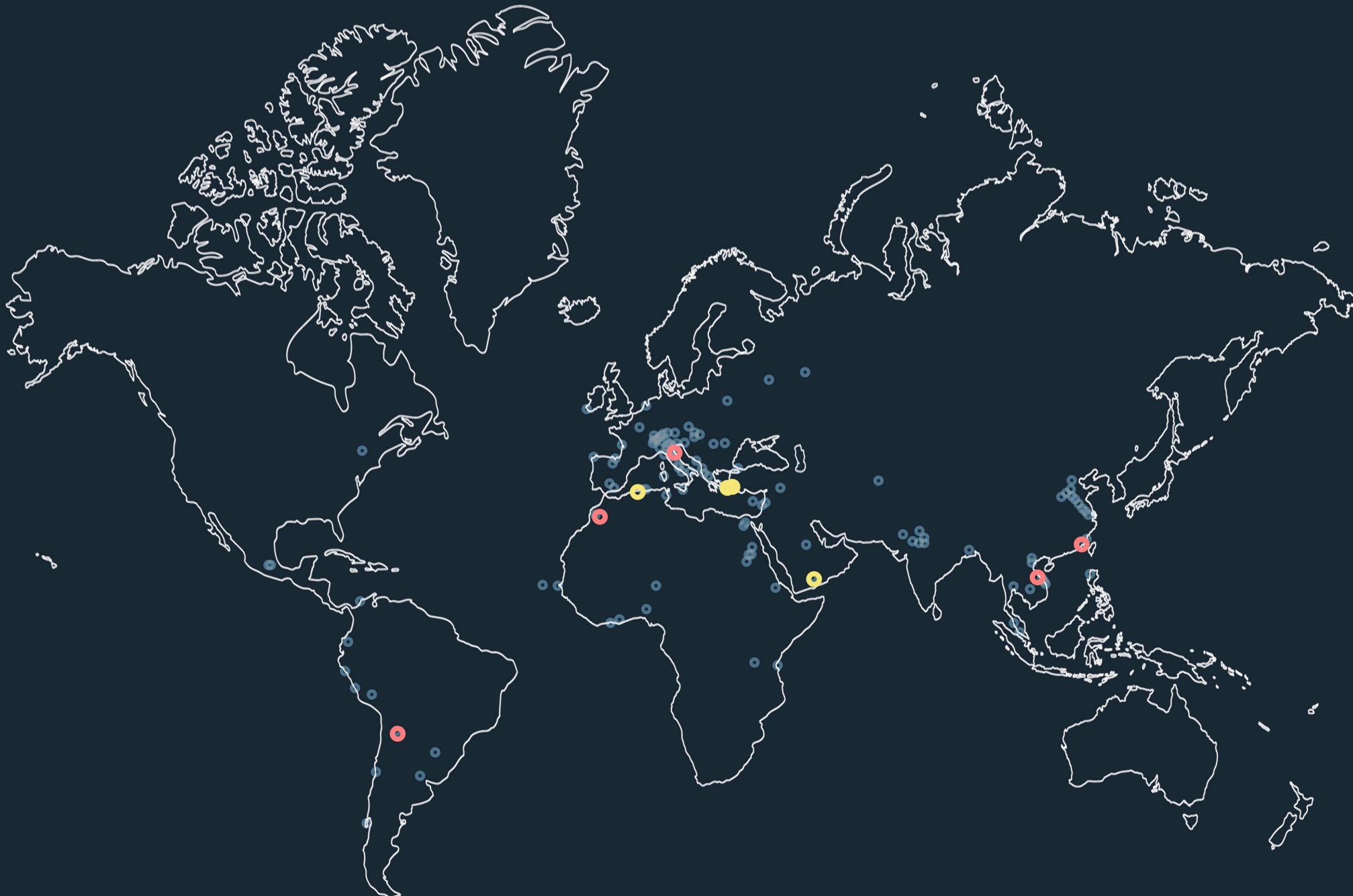
IV. WORLD HERITAGE SITES AND COMPETITORS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

A total of 396 architects expressed interest in participating in The Future of the Profession – Empowering the Next Generation in Participatory Urban Design by registering on the competition platform. The UIA received 140 submissions and 139 proposals from young architects worldwide, representing 45 countries across all five UIA regions.



- Region I – 36 submissions
- Region II – 28 submissions
- Region III – 18 submissions
- Region IV – 40 submissions
- Region V – 18 submissions

The sites selected by competitors covered different countries and the five UIA regions:



- Sites in Region I - 29 proposals
- Sites in Region II - 21 proposals
- Sites in Region III - 19 proposals
- Sites in Region IV - 46 proposals
- Sites in Region V - 20 proposals

Three (3) proposals covered transborder sites, spanning across Region I and Region II.

V. PRIZE WINNERS AND HONOURABLE MENTIONS

V.1 PRIZES

FIRST PRIZE

USER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 67c99492f1ce8

COMPETITOR Radical-J

TEAM LEADER Amath Luca Diatta

TEAM MEMBERS Greta Allegretti, Letizia Allegretti, Pietro Brunazzi, Elena

Paccagnella, Stefano Tremolada

COUNTRY Italy

W[oa]ndering Medina stood out for its profound sensitivity to both the tangible and intangible dimensions of heritage. Eschewing the conventional notion of a singular architectural object, the proposal dissolves into the existing urban fabric, attuned to the Medina’s spatial rituals, material fragility, and layered socio-cultural rhythms. It neither dominates nor isolates but positions itself as a quiet companion to the city’s daily life.

Rather than proposing a centralised visitor centre, the project offers a dispersed and situated experience—one that unfolds through a series of subtle spatial cues embedded within the Medina itself. This approach transforms the city into a living archive, where discovery and interpretation emerge through movement and engagement rather than display or monumentality. The architecture becomes a framework for storytelling, privileging context over intervention.

The true strength of the proposal lies in its curatorial mindset. It redefines what it means to intervene in heritage by embracing absence, silence, and restraint as powerful tools of design. Without imposing form or erasing what exists, the project allows the Medina to speak for itself —affirming that preservation, when approached with care, can be deeply contemporary, participatory, and inseparable from place.

W[oa]ndering Medina challenges and proposes for the UNESCO site 'Medina of Marrakech'. W[oa]ndering Medina is a visitor center that embraces and highlights the dynamics of mutual exchange between the UNESCO site Medina of Marrakech and its visitors – or rather, all users of the urban space, including residents and those that have the opportunity to pass through it. The very name of the center – **W[oa]ndering Medina** – stems from an undeniable and defining characteristic of the Medina: its **labyrinthine layout**, which inevitably leads every visitor to lose and find their way over and over again. This name references the two fundamental actions essential to experiencing the Medina: **wandering**, the act of roaming through its intricate fabric, and **wondering**, the sense of awe in discovering its beauty, revealed step by step. To make these two actions explicit, the project is based on an **in-depth reading of the site, its urban fabric, the relationships that shape it, and its multiple identities** – ranging from an imperial city to a border trade hub and even an exotic destination for the cultural elite of fashion and design – and on the **incorporation of the objectives defined by UNESCO for visitor centers in World Heritage Sites (UNESCO, The Role of Visitor Centers in UNESCO Designated Sites, 2019)**. The proposal is structured around two key components: an **urban project**, offering a comprehensive vision and experience of the Medina, the **design of the visitor center within El Badl Palace**, which serves as the official visitor center for the UNESCO site. In this sense, the W[oa]ndering Medina visitor center is not conceived as a centralized hub, nor as a starting or ending point, but rather as a **strategic and highly sensitive node within a vast and intricate network** – one that, in all its complexity and potential, encompasses the entire UNESCO site.

Layout of the urban project Certain elements of the Medina's fabric – recognized as both structural and structuring in its general composition, as well as fundamental to the experience within it – serve as the foundation for an urban project designed around key moments of the visit. At these designated points, several devices are placed which, when applied to various urban surfaces – both vertical and horizontal – serve as elements of orientation and understanding of the place. In particular, the **system of walls and gates**, which form the first point of contact between the Medina and its users, marks the moment of entry, where each threshold becomes the starting point (onset) of a journey. Once inside, the Medina's dense and intricate pattern, in which visitors find themselves immersed (and, to some extent, disoriented), defines the **moment of exploration** where a network of paths and narrative threads guides visitors through the city, encouraging them to get lost and find their way again, following a coordinated graphic and communicative strategy. Within the urban fabric, encounters with a **network of points of interest** – riads, gardens, monuments – shape the moment of discovery, where each designated site offers a deeper understanding of a specific aspect or reality of the Medina. Finally, **major landmarks** – such as Jemaa el-Fnaa square, as well as the visitor center located within El Badl Palace – define the moment of knowledge, where the most profound and complete unveiling of the Medina and its meanings takes place.



to calibrate, guide, and distribute visitors across multiple itineraries, helping to prevent potential overcrowding. Rather than concentrating activity in a single location, the proposal engages multiple sites, encouraging visitors to move continuously throughout the entire area – from the outer edges to the core of the Medina and vice versa. Expanding the visitor experience beyond just the main attractions promotes a form of **sustainable and culturally rich tourism**, one that not only provides essential resources for the site and those who care for it daily but also ensures that it is neither exploited nor damaged. Instead, the project fosters an authentic and respectful engagement with the site's heritage and value.

The visitor center at El Badl Palace El Badl Palace plays a particularly significant role in the experience of the Medina, both as one of its most renowned attractions and as a **key access point to the city and a vast network of green spaces to the south** (the Jardins d'Agdal). The visitor center is composed of multiple elements, strategically positioned at different points within the archaeological site. Some interventions establish a **direct continuity with the ruins**, particularly around the current entrance, the eastern wall, and the remains of the pavilion in that area. As part of an effort to enhance the site, certain spaces are redefined in terms of volume and spatial perception through the use of lightweight wooden structures, fabric draperies, and decorative ceramic elements. These designed yet dematerialized spaces are primarily intended for welcoming visitors who wish to enter the archaeological site directly, without passing through the other sections of the visitor center. Additionally, some palace areas are repurposed for museographic use, effectively exhibiting themselves as part of the visitor experience.



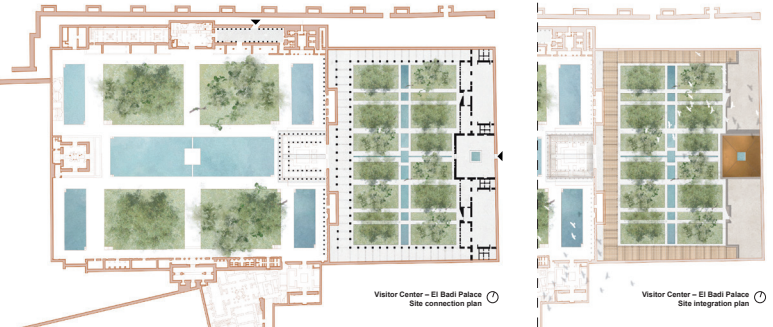
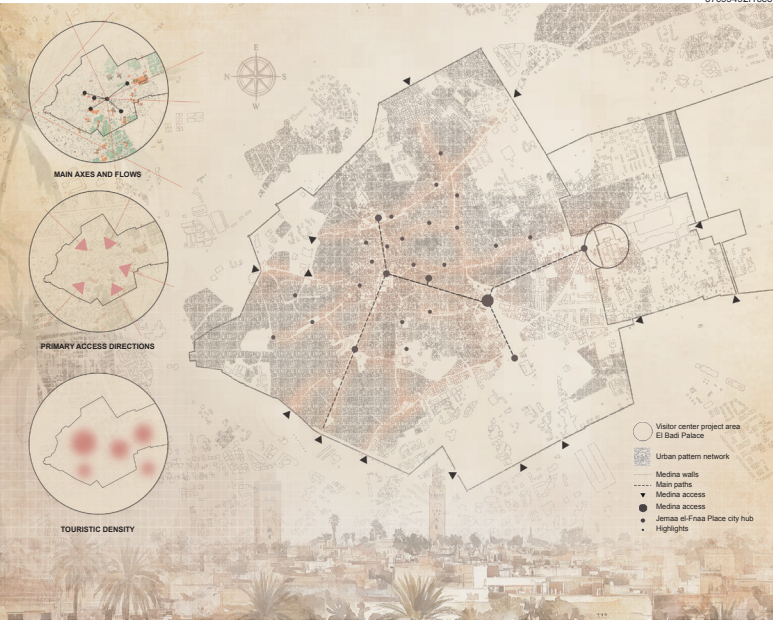
Interior view of the intervention among the northern ruins – featuring a wooden structure and roofing, complemented by shading fabric drapes and decorative traditional ceramic panels



Exterior view of the pavilion designed on the archaeological traces along the eastern side – featuring a wooden structure and fabric drapes running along the wall, culminating in the central volumetric reconstruction

For the implementation of UNESCO objectives The W[oa]ndering Medina proposal – both in its urban project and in the visitor center at El Badl Palace – aligns with the **key areas of interest outlined in the report The role of Visitor Centers in UNESCO Designated Sites (UNESCO, 2019)**. It introduces a **new formal expressiveness to the context**, connects previously isolated areas, and enhances the **visibility and accessibility of the site's unique qualities**. The project focuses on some main core goals regarding different stakeholders, taking the possible ways of using the sites as main stimulus: from the ordinary tourist visit, aimed at didactically and directly investigating the history of the heritage, to the specialised visit of the targeted researcher or architect, to the continuous living experience of members of the local community. The main functions of the project focuses on **tourism sustainability and visitors' management, interpretation of heritage, educational services**, community engagement and community-oriented services. In particular, project activities are divided into three macro-categories. **Information:** the reopening of the courtyard adjacent to the El Badl Palace and the overall design of the project allow for the **reinterpretation and understanding of the original form of the palace**, formed by long porticoed paths and pavilions defined a strong axially in the overall design furthermore, the particular shading systems proposed allow for **direct reference to the intangible heritage of local traditions and Moroccan handicrafts**, as a tool for empowering local identity. **Education:** the structural system used has a double value with respect to the issue of sustainability and social impact. On the one hand, the proposed structure consists of a **system of dry, modular and reversible joints that do not permanently affect the existing heritage**; on the other, the formal result, constituting at first glance a static reinforcement structure, already installed following the 2023 earthquake, **draws attention to the fragility of the urban fabric and heritage itself**; however, once the emergency phase has passed, the same structures define spaces spread throughout the city for **social aggregation and sharing**, including through workshop or debate activities hosted in urban spaces or in the pavilion spaces within the El Badl Palace. **Accessibility:** the project addresses the issue of spatial fruition not only through the design of **fully accessible and walkable spaces**, but also through the design of spaces where there is full freedom to stop and rest to enjoy the visit, spaces where one can stop and reflect, spaces where it is possible to **set up temporary exhibitions** in full functionality and usability.

Highlights for a sustainable tourism project W[oa]ndering Medina incorporates elements of modularity and mobility, both in time and space, with the goal of seamlessly integrating into the existing dynamics of the Medina. Working within an urban UNESCO site requires addressing the challenge of balancing the **inhabited, everyday dimension** with the **tourism-driven, exceptional, dimension**. Both are fundamental to the identity of this World Heritage site, yet they can also come into conflict, particularly in cases of overtourism, which can compromise its proper enjoyment and preservation. With this in mind, the project is designed to be **flexible over time**, allowing different components to be implemented and activated at different moments to best respond to the city and its inhabitants. More broadly, W[oa]ndering Medina also plays a role in reshaping how tourists experience the city, acting as a tool



Interior view of the pavilion designed on the archaeological traces along the eastern side – featuring a wooden structure and drapery framing the view of El Badl Palace, with the visitor center courtyard behind



View of the inner façade of the visitor center – featuring the wooden columns and roofing of the portico in the foreground, with the lush vegetation and water basins of the central garden in the background

SECOND PRIZE

USER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

COMPETITOR

TEAM LEADER

TEAM MEMBERS

COUNTRY

67b69908b4c8a

CDH Team

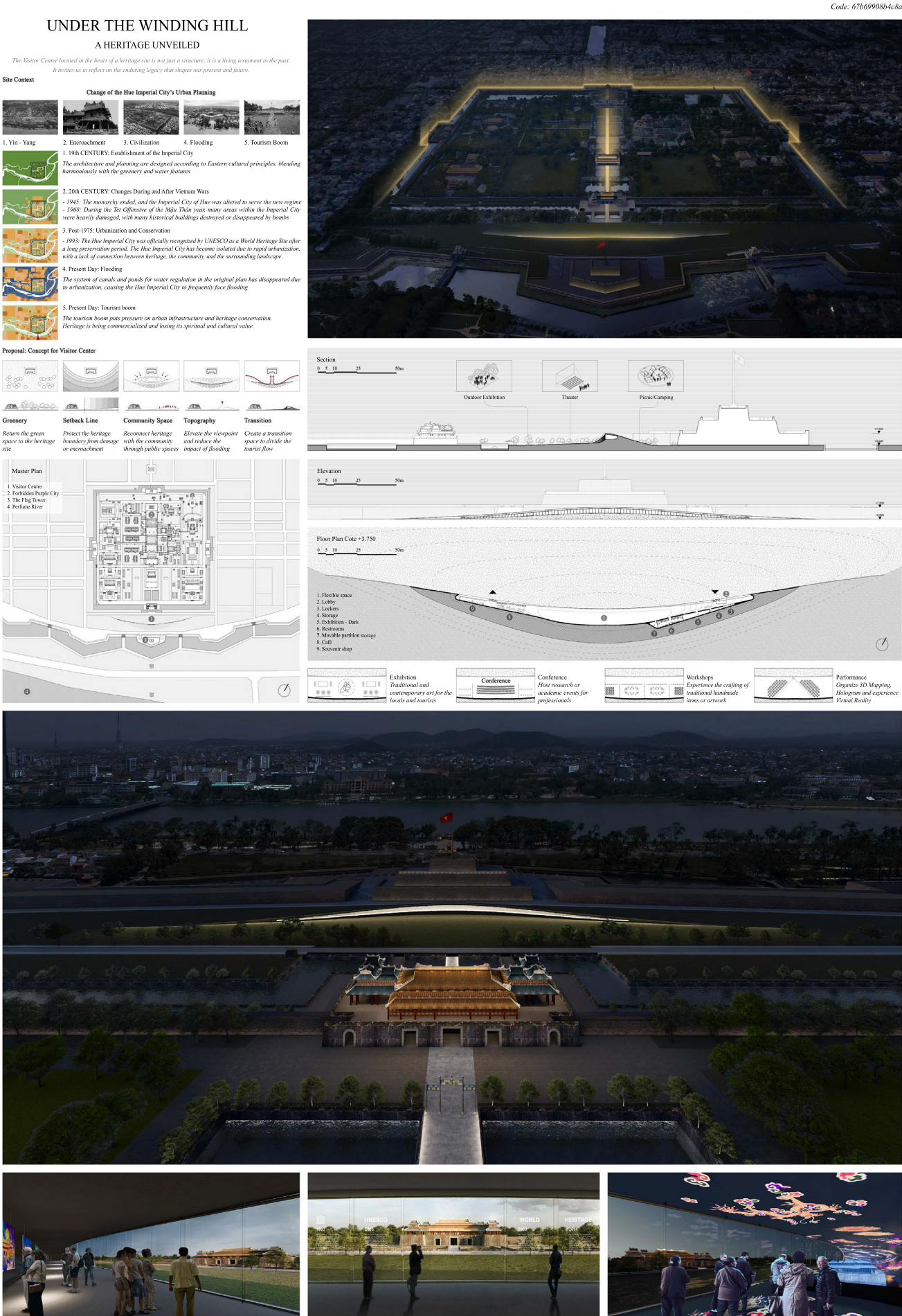
Bui Minh Chau

Nguyen Thi My Duyen, Pham Nguyen Gia Huy

Vietnam

Under the Winding Hill is a simple yet bold proposal that skilfully navigates the boundary between architecture and landscape. It seeks both to reframe the experience of the heritage site and to protect it from the threat of flooding. Through a straightforward tectonic gesture that subtly echoes the geometry of the existing fortifications, the design introduces an elongated, partially subterranean volume to house the visitor centre. This configuration maintains a continuous visual connection with the adjacent World Heritage site.

However, a degree of tension arises from the scale of the intervention. While conceived as a protective measure, its physical presence introduces visual disruption to Ngo Mon Square, raising important questions about the balance between preservation and spatial impact.



THIRD PRIZE

USER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 67852372de19f
COMPETITOR Distortion Studio
TEAM LEADER Davide Contran
TEAM MEMBERS -
COUNTRY Italy

Tulou Consolidation presents a sensitive and restrained intervention that places the existing Tulou at the heart of the proposal—not as a backdrop, but as the protagonist. The project’s minimal physical footprint, vernacular material palette, and quiet architectural language reflect a deep respect for cultural continuity and contextual memory. Its strength lies in its ability to engage with the site’s history of abandonment not through spectacle, but through spatial empathy and subtle reactivation.

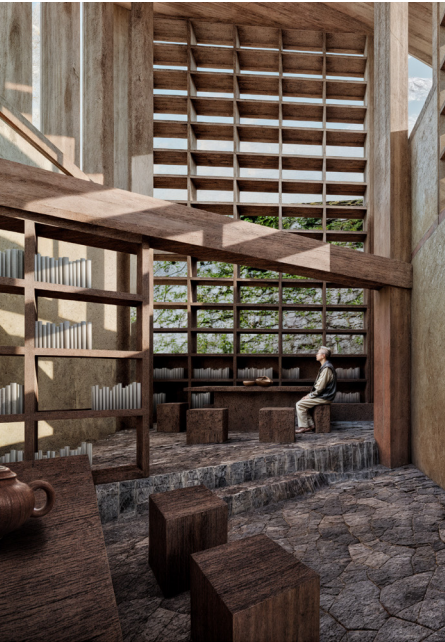
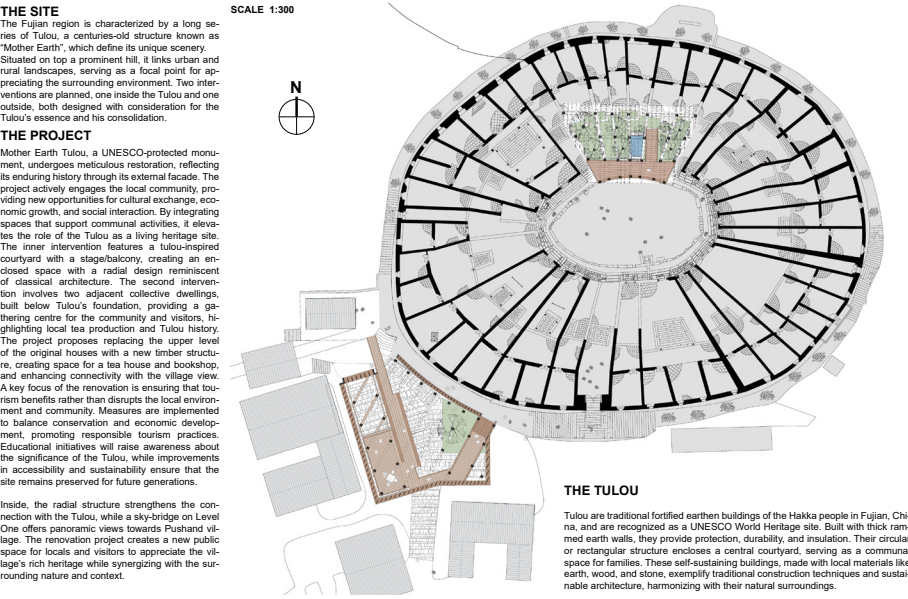
The intervention carefully avoids overpowering the historic structure, choosing instead to touch it lightly and allow its architectural and cultural presence to remain intact. The addition of a tea house and circulation elements show an intention to reanimate daily life and social interaction within and around the Tulou. Its vernacular sensibility and material harmony offer a poetic atmosphere that aligns with the character of the surrounding village and landscape.

However, despite these strengths, the proposal has space for development. The program lacks clarity in terms of long-term functionality, and the connections between the new elements and the original Tulou could be more articulated. In further developing the proposal, issues of accessibility, environmental response, and broader site integration should be addressed.

As it stands, the project reads more as a thoughtful architectural gesture than as a complete strategy for cultural and spatial revitalization.

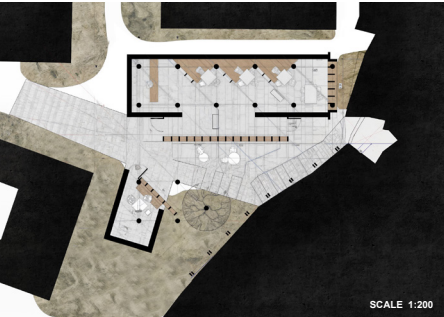
Tulou Consolidarion
Fujian, Cina

Identification Number
67852372de19f



TEA HOUSE AND BOOKSHOP
This building is a reuse of two previous structures, combining them to create a generous public space serving both the city and the site. It functions as a tea house and a book- shop, providing a place to relax and read documents and publications, both in physical and digital formats, related to the history and construction of Tulou. A place to admire the stone that characterizes the construction of the Tulou on the lower floor, but, above all, a vantage point from which to appreciate the entire village.

TEMPORARY GARDEN
This intervention features a courtyard inspired by the typical Hakka typology.
The garden is delineated by a stage/balcony that can serve as a platform for performances or as seating for the audience. The inner courtyard constitutes an enclosed garden adorned with water features and trees. This infrastructure can be used for spectacles and local festivities, serving both as a stage and as a seating area for the audience.



FOURTH PRIZE

USER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 67c03bb0a76b6

COMPETITOR DENARA

TEAM LEADER Francesco Rambelli

TEAM MEMBERS Nicolò Calandrini, Mirko Tavaniello Boresi

COUNTRY Italy

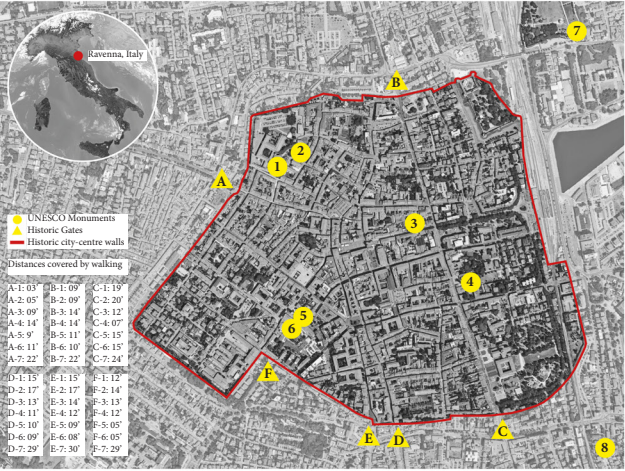
Golden Gates represents a highly sensitive and contextually aware intervention that simultaneously reactivates neglected heritage assets and proposes a strategic framework for engaging with city centres. By centring the intervention on Ravenna’s historical gates, the project reconsiders access to and perception of the city’s historic core.

The accompanying case study demonstrates an approach that is both minimal and respectful of the existing context, using a material palette that deliberately references Ravenna’s listed Byzantine heritage.

While the project achieves a commendable balance between preservation and contemporary reinterpretation, in further developing the proposal, the visitor centre’s programme would benefit from better articulation—as well as a more explicit connection to the broader system of World heritage sites in Ravenna—enhancing the project’s coherence and cultural resonance.

GOLDEN GATES

Territorial framework map of the city of Ravenna, Italy



Ravenna: an open-air UNESCO site

Ravenna is a city in Italy, a province of the Emilia-Romagna region, and has 8 UNESCO sites on its territory. The peculiarity of Ravenna is given by the relationship between the very high concentration of UNESCO sites and the small distance in which they are located from each other. In practice, the city center can be considered as a large UNESCO site since all 7 sites are about 20 minutes away from each other on foot; if we exclude Sant'Apollinare in Classe, the other 7 sites are located inside or close to the ancient walls of the historic city.

The walls of Ravenna have Roman origins and have undergone modifications and variations from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance during the Venetian occupation. The thick and high walls, still intact and well preserved, are interspersed at strategic points by the Gates - *Porta* in Italian - that guaranteed controlled access to the city itself.

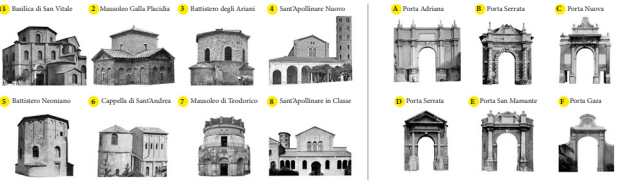
Each Gate had a specific nature and appearance based on its function and the place where it stood. The Gate was the main visual element of a city: the main streets were often guarded by ornate and majestic Gates to charm the stranger or celebrate the visit of important figures, as well as to present the city itself; others had a particularly rough image to intimidate enemies, or had a lesser architectural complexity due to the secondary streets they served.

Ravenna currently has seven Gates: Porta Adriana, Porta Gaza, Porta San Mamante, Porta Sisi, Porta Ravennana, Porta Nuova and Porta Serrata. The origins of the names of these Gates are uncertain given their change over time depending on the various events that occurred within the city.

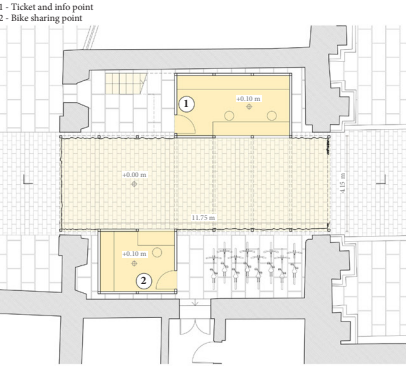
The pavilions mainly consist of a central body, given by the extrusion of the shape of the entrance to the Gate, to which auxiliary bodies containing services such as ticket office, coffee bar, bike sharing and others are added in relation to the specific size of each of the 6 Gates.

The project is made with light metal structures using a dry assembly technique. This choice favors ease of construction, economic savings and respect for the existing given that the pavilion, being reversible, does not affect or modify the existing, except its perception. The golden color of the pavilion is a tribute to the Byzantine mosaics present inside the churches and basilicas of the city.

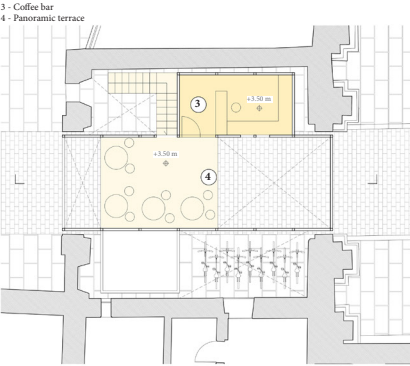
The project aims to restore the value of crossing the Gate intended as the moment of crossing a threshold; the Gate thus returns to be a visual and physical object that must be overcome in order to access the road that enters the city.



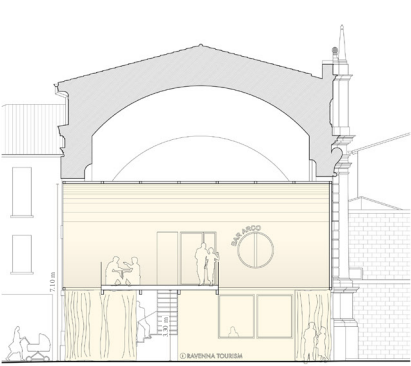
Ground floor plan +0.00 m / scale 1:200



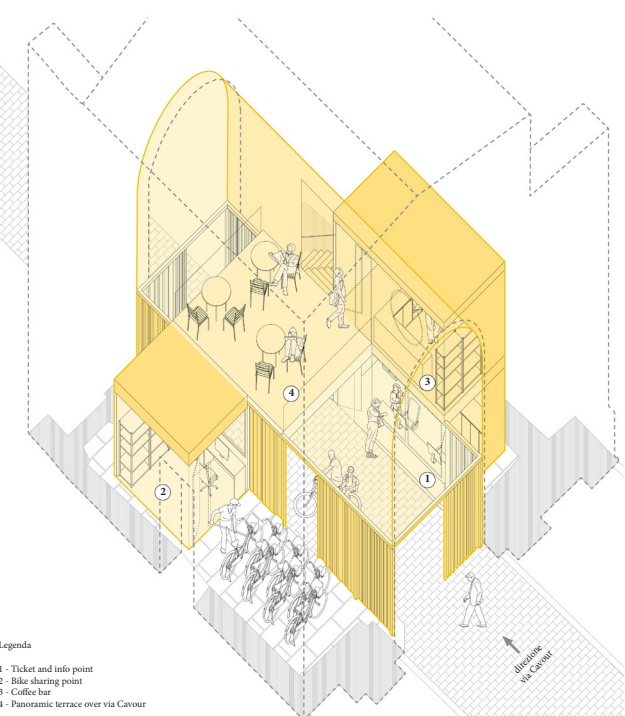
First floor plan +3.10 m / scale 1:200



Longitudinal section / scale 1:200



Nord-west axonometry



Photorealistic rendering of the project in Porta Adriana



Legenda

- 1 - Ticket and info point
- 2 - Bike sharing point
- 3 - Coffee bar
- 4 - Panoramic terrace over via Cavour

Axonometry S-W



Axonometry N-E



Axonometry S-W



Mosaic detail located in Sant'Apollinare in Classe



Porta Serrata



Porta San Mamante



Porta Gaza



Porta Sisi



Porta Nuova



FIFTH PRIZE

USER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 67c904467b91a

COMPETITOR AAtlas

TEAM LEADER Mateo Boasso

TEAM MEMBERS Laura Paz

COUNTRY Argentina

The proposal for the visitor center at Quebrada de Humahuaca successfully meets all the objectives of the competition, adeptly addressing both educational and informational functions.

By employing a series of interventions that engage various areas of the World Heritage site, it offers a credible and thoughtful strategy that is sensitive to the context and that intelligently involves the local community in the construction and operation of the facility.

While the design minimizes the impact of the new construction on the site by reactivating the central market area, rural pavilion and archaeological relics, it falls short of establishing a more original architectural language. instead it presents a vernacular approach that closely resembles other existing structures within the site both in terms of materials and architectural motifs.



V.2 HONOURABLE MENTIONS

USER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	67c9aa9980d13
COMPETITOR	Olga Sinelnikova
TEAM LEADER	Olga Sinelnikova
TEAM MEMBERS	Semen Egorov, Liia Akhmerova, Anastasia Sergeeva
COUNTRY	Russia

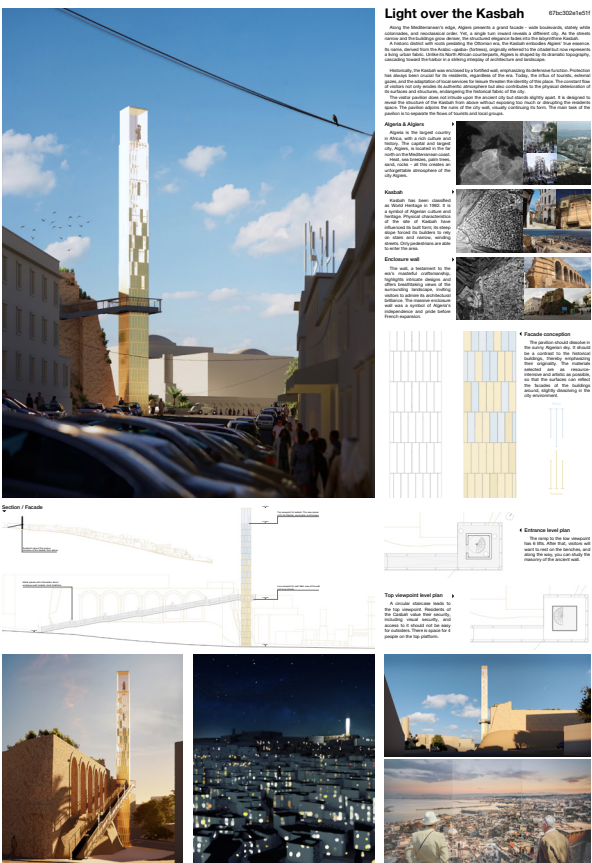
PROTECTED by ANCIENT addresses the challenge of engaging with ancient ruins by seeking to digitally revive the Artemision, part of the Ephesus World Heritage site. It establishes a thoughtful and visually engaging strategy for visitors, aiming to draw attention to the monument’s historic significance. While the intervention accentuates certain elements of the site, it also introduces a new structure that, at times, shifts focus away from the ruins themselves, subtly altering their contextual reading.

In its current form, the project offers limited functionality beyond that of an elevated viewpoint. As a visitor centre, it would benefit from a richer programme and deeper interpretive content to more fully support the site’s heritage values. The overall approach privileges visual impact over integration, but it presents a strong conceptual base from which further development could enhance both spatial coherence and cultural resonance.

USER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	67bc302e1e51f
COMPETITOR	Vladimir Obrosov
TEAM LEADER	Vladimir Obrosov
TEAM MEMBERS	Olga Erukova
COUNTRY	Russia

Light over the Kasbah presents a bold and poetic gesture, evoking the slender verticality of minarets while introducing a new architectural figure within the skyline of the historic city. Its reflective materiality aspires to dissolve into the atmosphere, blending with the sky rather than competing with the dense urban grain below. This ethereal presence positions the project as a contemplative landmark, delicately hovering at the edge of the Kasbah.

However, despite its elegance and formal clarity, the intervention appears somewhat removed from the spatial and cultural context of the site. While it offers a visually compelling architectural gesture, its connection to the everyday realities and lived experiences of the place could be further developed.

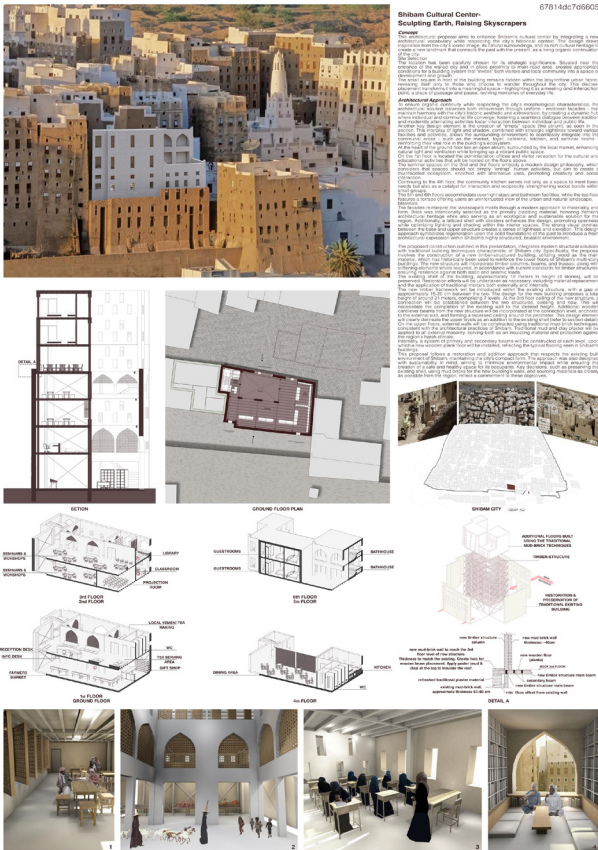


USER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 67814dc7d6605
 COMPETITOR Panagiota Raitso, Amalia Kasampali, Georgia Rozani
 TEAM LEADER Georgia Rozani
 TEAM MEMBERS Panagiota Raitso, Amalia Kasampali
 COUNTRY Greece

Shibam Cultural Center – Sculpting Earth, Raising Skyscrapers presents a respectful and contextually grounded intervention rooted in vernacular continuity. It responds thoughtfully to the site’s terraced form and social fragility, preserving the historic façade while reimagining the interior for civic use.

The proposal demonstrates a strong understanding of local material culture and construction logic, offering spaces that are intimate, familiar, and socially inclusive. Yet, it leans heavily on formal preservation, with limited innovation and a lack of conceptual clarity to support a truly transformative vision.

As it stands, the project feels more cautious than catalytic, but it presents a strong base from which further development could progress to reactivating the site’s architectural and urban potential.



USER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 6782b2828a7bd
 COMPETITOR Giorgios Tsikalis
 TEAM LEADER Giorgios Tsikalis
 TEAM MEMBERS -
 COUNTRY Greece

Digital Heritage Hub: Preserving Delos beyond time critically engages with the challenges confronting the Delos heritage site, particularly those related to rising sea levels and climate change. It introduces a protective architectural gesture aimed at ensuring the continuity of the visitor centre in the face of potential catastrophe.

However, while the concept is ambitious, the proposal could benefit from greater clarity and a more direct engagement with the specific risks threatening the heritage site itself.

As it stands, the intervention provides an intriguing starting point, though further refinement would be needed to strengthen its credibility as a comprehensive and site-responsive solution.



V.3 OTHER SHORTLISTED PROJECTS

USER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 67be1b9b30195
COMPETITOR Duarte Franco da Rosa
TEAM LEADER Duarte Franco da Rosa
TEAM MEMBERS Diogo Nascimento, Mafalda Cotrim, Margarida Bessa, Rafael Faustino
COUNTRY Portugal

USER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 67cae516648ef
COMPETITOR Alex Yakupov
TEAM LEADER Airat Zaidullin
TEAM MEMBERS -
COUNTRY Russia

USER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 67a5286b12b22
COMPETITOR Ballart Terral
TEAM LEADER Guillaume Ballart Terral
TEAM MEMBERS Hélène Clara Ballart Terral
COUNTRY Spain

USER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 67b69908b4c8a
COMPETITOR Ginzok & Free Object Institute
TEAM LEADER Zhaoqi Chen
TEAM MEMBERS Qiuyi Bian, Yang Lan
COUNTRY United States of America

USER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 67c7d45984af3
COMPETITOR Hinke Majoor X Fabian van der Leer
TEAM LEADER Hinke Majoor
TEAM MEMBERS Fabian van der Leer
COUNTRY Netherlands

USER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 67b69908b4c8a
COMPETITOR Ahmad Hilal
TEAM LEADER Ahmad Hilal
TEAM MEMBERS Ahmad Hilal, Yumna Aly Heikal, Abdelrahman Hisham
COUNTRY Germany