The art of reinvention: how cities and architects unite to combat climate change

ARCHITECTURE / 19 MAR 2018 / BY ELLIE STATHAKI

A global competition has been launched, inviting architects to propose innovative solutions that tackle urban density and climate change in different parts of the world. Pictured here, a past entry for the city of Paris. La Ville multi-strate (The Multi-Layered City), a concept by Jacques Ferrier Architectures, Chartier Dalix Architectes, SLA Paysagistes is a project spanning the belt road and thus connecting Paris and its suburbs. *Image : Bnp Paribas Real Estate / Jacques Ferrier Architectures / Chartier Dalix Architectes / SLA Paysagistes / Splann*

INFORMATION

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What do you get when you combine one successful urban experiment, 19 cities from around the world, and 19 sustainability conscious mayors? Reinventing Cities is a global initiative that invites architects to explore different ways of tackling the challenges of climate change and urban density through creatively reimagining neglected parts of our cities.

This is an unprecedented international competition 'to stimulate sustainable development and to celebrate innovative solutions to environmental and urban challenges', explain the organisers behind it, C40, a network of the world's megacities committed to addressing climate change. The project's initial iteration, Reinventing Paris, was orchestrated in the French capital two years ago with striking and inspiring results; so it felt natural for C40 to roll the program out to more urban hubs across the world.

The competition is now open again with participating cities including Auckland, Cape Town, Chicago, Houston, Dubai, Lima, Madrid, Mexico City, Milan, Montréal, Oslo, Paris, Portland, Quito, Reykjavik, Rio de Janeiro, Salvador de Bahia, San Francisco and Vancouver. Architects have been invited to submit their interest, designs, ideas and innovative solutions for a select number of pre-identified sites within those cities.

A shortlist will be drawn from those submissions, which will lead to the final winning proposal for each of the under-utilised sites. This is not a theoretical competition; in fact the participating teams will compete to buy, or lease the site and to implement their project.

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'Think local, act global, is the 21st-century state of mind. By launching this global competition, we make this philosophy very concrete celebrating the most vibrant innovative solutions to environmental challenges,' said Anne Hidalgo, Mayor of Paris and Chair of C40. 'Reinventing Cities will set new standards of sustainability in cities and who better than our citizens to imagine the future of their cities? I am convinced that the winning projects will surprise us all and present innovations we are unable to imagine today.'

The overall winner will be announced in early 2019. The result? 'The competition will serve as a model for cities around the world, demonstrating how the alliance between cities and business can shape the future delivering healthier, greener and economically viable urban development', say the organisers.

Reinventing Paris, 2016: Edison Lite by Manuelle Gautrand Architecture is housed in a vacant plot. The residential project boasts 30% of shared spaces, including a 'wine cellar workshop', a rooftop vegetable garden and an open kitchen. *Image: Manuelle Gautrand Architecture*

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