

Competition Rules - English excerpt

Open Call

A HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Design New Housing Solutions for Asylum Seekers

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nederlandwordtanders.nl/openoproep/

Colofon

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Preface

‘Holland isn’t full, but it is full of unused space.’ These words were spoken by Dutch government architect Floris Alkemade in an interview featured in *Nieuwsuur* (a Dutch programme covering current events). By stating this he also verbalised what is the challenge we will be facing in the coming decade: finding the best approach to fill vacant space in a meaningful way.

We share the ambition to fuse this spatial task with one of the other very urgent challenges we’re facing right now: the housing of refugees. Vacant spaces in existing buildings and empty sites in villages and cities offer great opportunities to accommodate this demand for housing. Ideally in such a way that a location where refugees are housed will present an asset to their environment, both spatially and socially. We are in need for great ideas to accommodate refugees as well as other groups looking for a proper house, such as: students, elderly, foreign workers and people seeking their first, affordable house. We are convinced that together we will be able to develop great tools to tackle these social and spatial issues. And in order to achieve this goal, we now call on you to muster all of your design skills to give shape to solutions that help us face these challenges, in a sustainable, innovative and inspiring way.

We have great expectations regarding the abundance of ideas and designs that will be submitted into this competition. Let us together make this wonderful country more beautiful and liveable, for everybody.

Carolien Schippers (COA)
Floris Alkemade (Rijksbouwmeester)



Jury

From-left-to-right: Mick Eekhout - Adri Duivesteijn - Ferdows Kazemi - Carolien Schippers - Floris Alkemade - Jos Wienen - Shyam Khandekar

Please note

The text below is merely an (English) excerpt of the competition rules for the architecture competition 'a Home away from Home'. The excerpt is intended to give an impression of the subject and aims of the competition and some of the terms and conditions involved with it. Please be aware that ideas submitted into the competition must be written in Dutch. We advise anyone who is interested in entering the competition to 'team up' with Dutch speaking professionals or students. Below you'll find, in English translation, the preface written by initiators of the competition Carolien Schippers (COA) and Floris Alkemade (government architect) and the first chapter of the competition rules.

Introduction

COA (abbreviation of 'Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers') organises, in collaboration with the Rijksbouwmeester (government architect), an 'Open Call' for the design of new housing solutions for asylum seekers. The aim of this competition is to encourage the development of proposals for temporary housing. COA is responsible for providing asylum seekers with shelter, prior to the more permanent housing that is provided by municipalities after asylum seekers receive a residence permit. COA seeks innovative solutions to achieve a flexible stock of temporary housing units to adequately respond to the unpredictable and fluctuating influx of asylum seekers.

Motivation

The influx of asylum seekers into the Netherlands in 2015 knows no precedent. The latest numbers, as presented by the ministry of Security and Justice, show that it exceeds even the amount of refugees that came into the country in 1994, when 53,000 refugees migrated in from former Yugoslavia. In 2015 58,000 asylum seekers entered the country in total, most of whom originate from Syria (27,000). This exceptionally high influx presents a tremendous challenge for COA. The increasing influx is causing centres where asylum seekers are sheltered to become overcrowded, thus obliging COA to revert to emergency shelter and crisis shelter.

Simultaneously we have seen stagnation in the system, caused by the fact that asylum seekers are not adequately transferred to a house within a municipality, since the latter don't have sufficient housing capacity. Many asylum seekers, although already in possession of a temporary residence permit, are obliged to remain in a shelter until they are appointed a house in a municipality. This concerns approximately 16,000 people in the Netherlands. On average 70% of asylum seekers, after they receive a permit, move to a municipality in the Netherlands which in turn is required to provide housing. The amount of housing the municipality is required to provide is determined in relation to the local, existing population numbers. The housing of refugees that have actually already been given a residence permit within the 393 Dutch municipalities is not the core of the assignment at hand, but it is a fact that has to be taken into consideration as it is part of the context in which the larger housing issue exists.

New challenges require new solutions

At the heart of the competition is the urgency to develop housing solutions that enable COA to adequately respond to the unpredictable influx and nonetheless offer a safe, sober, social and appropriate home for asylum seekers. COA needs new solutions that extend beyond what is currently available. Powerful design combined with new production techniques and materials and technical innovation will be key to these new ideas.

Catalyst for a new stock of houses

It is not just COA that has a need for temporary, flexible and affordable housing solutions. This type of housing offers possibilities to a much broader group of individuals in need of housing for short or longer term. As mentioned above it is most obvious to consider refugees with permits as a second target group. But also for people looking for their first, affordable rental home, students or singles compact housing meets a demand that designers should take into consideration for their submission in this competition.

Background information

During the Kick-Off meeting January 18th COA shared necessary background information concerning the types of shelter presently used. This information will also be made available via the website, starting Wednesday January 20th.

Aims

Several aims are formulated for this competition:

- Developing innovative and achievable solutions for the housing of asylum seekers (in a context in which these solutions may also be employed for the other target groups mentioned)
- Encouraging innovation and powerful design in following fields: housing concepts, design, technique and new business models.
- Offering encouragement to students and professionals to mobilise their design skills and talent for this urgent social task.
- Giving an impetus to the realisation of tangible prototypes and to take steps towards the actual production of these solutions.

Procedure

The competition is launched under the title:

'Call for projects - A Home away from Home'

and is subtitled:

'New housing solutions for asylum seekers'

The competition entails a call for projects based on a vision. This approach was chosen to ensure that as many interested parties as possible will compete and that the expenses for participating will be limited. The competition is open to professional designers as well as students. Submissions of professionals and students are judged separately. The competition consists of two rounds. The terms under which it can be entered are deliberately kept modest. Following the call for projects is a phase in which more detailed designing and even prototyping takes place, with the aim to test various solutions in practise and eventually have produced. How this final part of the proceedings will take shape has not yet been established.

The first round is conceptualised as an idea competition. Participants can submit proposals for both redeveloping existing buildings into housing facilities (category 'Inside') and developing housing solutions on available sites (category 'Outside'). The call is open for international submissions, but please keep in mind that the language in which the submission is written has to be Dutch. Out of the submissions in the first round the jury selects a maximum of 12 (in principle max. 6 per category) that can enter the second round of the competition. Out of this selection at least one of the submissions is going to be the product of a student or student team. In this stage the jury is allowed to give recommendations for further development of the submitted ideas. Participants that continue in round two receive the amount of €2500 (excl. VAT) as financial compensation.

Participants are invited to consider following concepts, not as a rule to follow, but as possible directions for ideas. We explicitly challenge participants to think outside of this framework and not feel limited by it.

1. **Recycling after single use:** short lifespan, minimal cost for transport, construction and recycling.
2. **Disassembly and reassembly:** long lifespan, easily moveable to any other site or building only low costs involved.
3. **Convertibility:** long lifespan on a single location, but adaptable to various types of users, either subsequently or simultaneously.

Out of the submissions in the first round a number is selected and invited to enter the second round, in which their ideas will be developed into feasible and realistic plans, ready for industrial production. In this phase design teams can be complemented with additional expertise (regarding for instance production and finance). In this second round the jury will select a maximum of 6 winners, who will all receive another € 10,000, (excl. VAT) as a compensation for costs made. This marks the finish of the competition, when the results of the second round are announced.

COA has stated that following the competition it intends to have a limited number of the proposals developed into prototypes. Terms and conditions under which these steps take place will be disclosed at the appropriate time.

Planning

The competition entails an open call for projects based on a vision. It is open to both professional designers and students. The competition consists of two separate rounds. In the first round participants are asked to submit ideas and proposals. After the first round a selection of proposals, chosen by the jury, is going to be developed into more tangible and achievable plans. COA expressed the intention to develop a number of plans into prototypes and have them executed after the actual competition has ended.

Relevant dates for parties interested in entering the competition:

Round 1:

1 February (12:00) – entering questions regarding the competition using the available form on the website.

8 February - answers published

8 February - registration opening date

4 March (12:00) - closing of registration

14 March (12:00) - deadline for submitting proposals and vision