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1. OVERVIEW

This international one-stage architecture competition invites all architecture students, young architects and young professionals with a degree in architecture studies (≤ 40 years old) to develop and submit compelling ideas for the design of a contemporary **Site Gallery** located near the River Tower (Torre do Rio) in the bank of the Guadiana River and adjacent to the fortified walls of the village of Mértola, in the southeast of Portugal.

The **River Tower (Torre do Rio)** is a significant landmark on a prominent landscape, a place of great cultural heritage and historical significance with characteristics that must be fully preserved.

When generating a vision for an intervention located within such a spectacular place, it is essential that each proposal emphasizes, respects and celebrates the site, while providing visitors with a unique experience.

2. COMPETITION

The **Site Gallery** aims to create a cultural destination and focus on the protection of the local cultural heritage. The Site Gallery will provide a space to display Contemporary Art and a new sculpture garden to improve the pedestrian circulation and increase the relationship between the historic village of Mértola, the Guadiana river and the River Tower. The design proposal must be highly sensitive to the remains of the River Tower.

| Site Description

Climate: Summers are dry and hot while winters experience moderate temperatures. The annual average temperature in Mértola is 17.1°C . The hottest month is August with an average temperature of 24.5°C . The coldest month is January with an average temperature of 10.6°C .

Latitude: $37^{\circ} 38' 20''\text{ N}$

Longitude: $7^{\circ} 39' 44''\text{ W}$

Altitude: 35 m

Rainfall: Total annual precipitation averages 505 mm. The driest month is July and highest rainfall is in December.

Relative Humidity: December is the most humid month and July is the least humid month. The annual average relative humidity is around 72%.

Winds: Predominate winds are from the northwest. On average, the most wind is in the Summer time between June and September, with an average daily wind speed around 10 km/h.

| Site History

River Tower (Torre do Rio), Mértola

The village of Mértola is located in the southeast of Portugal, on a hill between the Guadiana and Oeiras rivers. Mértola is a testimony of centuries of occupation with archaeological remains scattered all over the city. Mértola is located about 35 m above sea level, in an area of great historical and cultural heritage. Traces of occupation date back to the Neolithic, five thousand years ago. The city of Mértola had assumed a prominent role in the trade route of the Mediterranean since the time of the Phoenicians, Greeks and Carthaginians. Romans occupied the city in the 2nd century BC and the presence of the Moors was of great Islamic cultural influence. Mértola was conquered from the Moors in the reign of Sancho II (1238).

The River Tower (Torre do Rio), located on the bank of the Guadiana river and adjacent to the fortified walls of the Mértola village was a prominent defensive structure that allowed to control the river navigation and protect the old port area. Due to its construction technique, the River Tower withstood the heavy flooding and strong pressures of the Guadiana river. Fragments and traces from the River Tower consist of six pillars arranged in a curvilinear line, with the “tower” in the riverbed. The remains of the arches that connected the structure are still visible. The pillar bases were built using local raw materials, shale and made use of marble from Roman buildings and stones from other regions, such as sandstones. The last three pillars can be accessed at the bottom through a barrel vaulted tunnel.

It is believed that the River Tower protected the old docking area of the vessels while acting as defense and allowing access from the interior of the walls to the river for water supply. The time of construction is unclear, but is believed to coincide with the beginning of the VI century.

| Program

SITE GALLERY

1. Reception area

Lobby / Entrance	40 m2
Bookstore	30 m2
Restrooms	20 m2
Total	90 m2

2. Gallery

Main exhibition space	200 m2
Exhibition room	70 m2
Storage	50 m2
Total	320 m2

3. Administration

Office space	60 m2
Private restrooms	15 m2
Total	75 m2

4. Auxiliary room

Equipment and mechanical room	10 m2
Storage	10 m2
Total	20 m2

5. Landscape / Exterior requirements

Pedestrian path and sculpture garden
Open-air performances

Total net area of the Site Gallery	505 m2
Total gross area of the Site Gallery	600 m2

Notes:

- Net area: Includes area to the interior surface of exterior walls and partitions.
- Gross area: Includes area occupied by exterior walls and partitions and circulation area.

Detailed description of the program:

1. Reception area

Lobby / Entrance:

Reception space for guests and visitors.

Bookstore:

Provide a bookstore with one workstation, where visitors can purchase books and catalogues related to the current and past exhibitions.

Restrooms:

Provide public restrooms located near the lobby.

2. Gallery

Exhibition spaces:

Areas designated as a multi-purpose space with ongoing contemporary art displays, such as photography, drawings, painting, sculpture and videos. Provide a main exhibition space and an exhibition room.

Storage:

Support area for storing exhibition material that can be accessed from the exhibition spaces.

3. Administration

Office space:

Area designated for personnel in charge of the administration of the Gallery, and publication of catalogues. Provide a meeting room for personnel and staff members.

Private Restrooms

Service area for personnel and staff.

4. Auxiliary room

Equipment and mechanical room:

Provide an area dedicated for the mechanical and electrical equipment.

General storage room:

Support area for storing maintenance equipment and miscellaneous items.

5. Landscape / Exterior requirements

- Provide a pedestrian path for the visitors to have access from the historic village of Mértola to the Site Gallery, sculpture garden and the remains of the River Tower. Areas to be determined by each participant's design proposal.
- Access 1: Access from the Largo da Misericórdia. It is a sequence of open spaces that flow into the river, leading to the River Tower.
- Access 2: Access from the Torre do Relógio with staircases leading to the riverside.
- Provide an exterior area to accommodate 70 seats for public events, music concerts and performances. Area to be determined by each participant's design proposal.

Notes:

The overall design of the Site Gallery must be sensitive to the surrounding context. Moving or removing existing walls to build any supporting structure will be avoided in all cases. Because this is an ideas competition, urban planning and building regulations will not be applied to the design proposal.

| Downloads

All documentation such as cad drawings, site photos and videos required to develop the competition proposal are available at www.arkxsite.com. Any additional information will not be provided during or after the registration period. All of the documentation was prepared, organised and published by the **ArkxSite** team for the sole purpose of this architecture ideas competition.

3. AWARDS

The jury members will award three prizes and seven honorable mentions.

1st Prize	2000 € (Two thousand euros)
2nd Prize	1000 € (One thousand euros)
3rd Prize	500 € (Five hundred euros)

7 Honorable Mentions

Publication

All submissions will be published on the **ArkxSite** website. All reasonable efforts will be made to publish and promote the winners and honorable mentions in architectural magazines and blogs worldwide; however, such results will rely on agreements made between the publication entities and ArkxSite.

Notes:

- Honorable Mention citations will not include a cash prize;
- This is strictly an ideas competition, an academic exercise and will not be built. ArkxSite or any other organisations do not have authority or intention to award contracts for design services as a result of this competition. Awarded proposals should consider their award as recognition of excellent work in this competition.
- Depending on which country, award prizes might be subject to tax withholdings.

4. JURY MEMBERS

The jury members will be composed of international professional architects and will be announced on the **ArkxSite** website.

| Evaluation Process

The jury members will review and evaluate all eligible competition proposals and will select the 3 winners and 7 Honorable Mentions. The jury members will base their decision on their own expertise, the work submitted by the participants and the information available on the competition website.

For whatever reason a jury member is unable to review and evaluate during the evaluation period, the jury member may be replaced by an alternate member selected by **ArkxSite**.

Evaluation criteria will be based on:

- Originality and quality of the proposal's design vision
- Responsiveness of the proposal to the competition's objectives
- Appropriateness to the site and its context
- Quality and clarity of the presentation

5. SCHEDULE

Competition opening	January 30, 2016
FAQ questions deadline	April 01, 2016
FAQ answers posted	April 08, 2016
Early Registration period	January 30 - April 15, 2016
Regular Registration period	April 16 - April 25, 2016
Registration Deadline	April 25, 2016
Submission Deadline	April 30, 2016
Jury Evaluation	May 20 - June 03, 2016
Announcement of Competition Results	June 17, 2016

Notes:

- FAQ (frequently asked questions) available on the **ArkxSite** website;
- All deadlines are established @ 23:59 hrs (Current local time in Portugal)

6. FAQ

Any questions related to the information found within this brief may be addressed by sending your questions to the email address: info@arkxsite.com or by using the contact form found on the **ArkxSite** website.

Questions will be answered and published on the FAQ page of the website on the date stated in the competition schedule. Questions related to this competition brief that are received after the FAQ deadline will not be addressed nor answered.

7. REGISTRATION

| Eligibility

The competition is open to all architecture students (undergraduate, graduate, master, PhD, etc.), young architects and young professionals with a degree in architecture studies (≤ 40 years old).

Each team may be composed of **1 up to 4 team members** and may include multidisciplinary members (designers, engineers, artists, etc.) as long as a single architecture student, young architect or young professional with a degree in architecture studies is part of the team. It is not mandatory to be a registered architect. All members of the team must be ≤ 40 years old on the date of the submission deadline.

Jury members or those involved with the preparation and organisation of this competition may not participate.

| Registration Process

All participants are required to submit the online registration form and complete a payment prior to the registration deadline established by the competition schedule in order for their competition proposal to be reviewed and evaluated. The registration process can be completed in 2 simple steps:

1. Registration form

Complete and submit the registration form located on the **ArkxSite** website www.arkxsite.com/registration

2. Payment

Select one of the following payment options: PayPal or by Bank transfer (see Payment Methods).

Registration Code: Upon submitting the online registration form and completing the payment, the participant should email a copy of the transaction receipt to submission@arkxsite.com as proof of payment. **The email subject must include the name of the team leader.**

The team leader will then receive a **Registration Code** by email confirming the registration in the competition. This **Registration Code** must be included in the **upper right hand corner** of the submitted panel.

| Fees

Early registration period	January 30 - April 15, 2016	60€ + VAT*
Regular registration period	April 16 - April 25 , 2016	90€ + VAT*

* A tax of 23% (VAT rate in Portugal) will be applied to the fees listed above.

Early registration fee	60€ + 23% = 73,80€
Regular registration fee	90€ + 23% = 110,70€

Notes:

- The registration fee refers to a single competition submission.
- Competitors may submit as many entries as they desire; however, each submission must have a unique registration code obtained through the registration form and payment process.
- Teams can not change the team leader or team members after submitting the online registration form and completing the payment.

| Payment Methods

PayPal *

Is a secure, fast and easy method for making international online payments. PayPal accepts debit cards and all major credit cards. (VISA, MasterCard, American Express, etc.). Upon completing the payment, the participant should email a copy of the transaction receipt to submission@arkxsite.com as proof of payment. **The email subject must include the name of the team leader.**

Bank transfer *

An alternative payment method can be made by bank transfer to the account listed below. Upon completing the payment, the participant should email a copy of the transaction receipt to submission@arkxsite.com as proof of payment. **The email subject must include the name of the team leader.**

Bank: Banco BPI, S.A.

IBAN: PT50 0010 0000 5168 6920 0019 5

SWIFT/BIC: BBPIPTPL

Notes:

- Any bank fees related to the bank transfer are the sole responsibility of those who are registering for the competition;
- Keep in mind the registration period deadline established by the competition schedule prior to making the payment.

| Refunds

Under no circumstances will the early or regular registration fees be refunded. The registration fees can only be applied to this competition and can not be transferred to a future competition under any circumstances.

8. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The competition submission will consist of a **single digital file** and should comply with the following requirements:

File Format:

- **(1) - A1 sized panel** (59,4 cm x 84,1 cm), **Landscape / Horizontal layout**
- **Registration Code must be located in the upper right-hand corner of the submitted panel**

Graphic layout:

- Graphic layout includes **text, drawings and renderings** to be determined by each team; however, the **program areas** should be clearly identified on the panel.

File type / size / name:

- **JPG** (RGB Color) with **5 Megabytes** (maximum). Recommended **300 dpi** resolution. The JPG file may be compressed to a ZIP or RAR file format.
- **File name** should only include the **Registration Code**.

For example: **SG00000.jpg**

| Online Submission

The competition panel must be submitted **only once** using the online file-transferring platform **WeTransfer.com** as a single file (JPG file may be compressed to a ZIP or RAR file format) and addressed to **submission@arkxsite.com**. Any submission made by other methods will not be downloaded.

| Submission Deadline

The competition panel should be sent prior to the deadline established on the competition schedule. Competitors are responsible for the arrival of their proposals within the corresponding deadline; therefore, time should be allowed for uploading the files via **wetransfer.com**. No proposal will be evaluated if received after the submission deadline.

9. RULES

| Language

The official language of the competition is **English**.

| Anonymity

This is an international, anonymous, single-stage design competition open to all architecture students, young architects, young professionals with a degree in architecture studies (≤ 40 years old) and multidisciplinary teams composed of landscape architects, urban designers, artists, etc. All members of the team must be ≤ 40 years old. (refer to Eligibility). All competition submissions are to remain anonymous throughout the competition phase and will only be identified using a registration code assigned by ArkxSite during the registration process, (refer to the submission requirements). No entry will be reviewed or evaluated that contains any mark, logo or other indication of the identity of the team members located on the competition panel. The identification of the 3 winners and 7 honorable mention awarded competition panels will only be revealed after the jury evaluation phase and at the time the competition results are published on the ArkxSite website.

| Ownership and Copyrights

Full ownership and copyrights of all submissions in connection to this competition are retained by the author of the work; however, ArkxSite retains the rights to publish (printed or online) and promote the submitted material at their own discretion regarding formats, sizes and composition layouts. All submissions will subsequently become part of the ArkxSite's digital archive.

If any participant wishes to publish, exhibit or promote their competition submission on any website, publications or social media, they are granted the rights to do so, as long as the title of this competition together with ArkxSite are properly referenced and credited as the competition organiser.

| Award notification

All awarded teams will be notified by email.

| Disqualification

Competition submissions will be automatically disqualified if:

- any attempt of any form of communication regarding this competition is made with the jury members or those involved with the preparation and organisation of this competition;
- any competition submission is received after the deadline as stated on the competition schedule;
- any competition submission panel includes any language other than English;
- any competition submission contains any mark, logo or other indication of the identity the author/s;
- any competition submission does not abide by the submission requirements and rules as stated in this competition brief.

| Conditions

- By submitting a proposal for this competition, each team member agrees and accepts the requirements, rules and conditions as listed in this competition brief, as well as final decision of the jury;
- ArkxSite reserves the right to vary, omit or make adjustments to this competition brief at any time during the competition phase. Any such changes will be made public on the website and an updated competition brief will be uploaded onto the website;
- This is strictly an ideas competition, an academic exercise and will not be built. ArkxSite or any other organisations do not have authority or intention to award contracts for design services as a result of this competition. Awarded proposals should consider their award as recognition of excellent work in this competition;
- Awarded competition participants may be asked for proof of their eligibility;
- Urban planning and building regulations will not be applied to the design proposal. The competition is organized by ArkxSite as an academic exercise to promote debate and reflection, encouraging new perspectives and innovative strategies of intervention within the territory;
- The jury members reserve the right to award any competition submission that reinterprets the parameters of the competition's objectives, when it is justified by the originality and quality of the proposal's design;
- Participants shall have no claim against ArkxSite in respect to this competition or any alteration made to this competition brief or the documentation such as cad drawings, site photos and site videos that were provided to develop the competition proposal.

10. CONTACT

For general questions please contact us at the email address: info@arkxsite.com or fill out the contact form on the website. Any question related to this competition brief should be emailed prior to the FAQ deadline. (see competition schedule). Any questions regarding the registration process and/or payment methods can be made until the Registration Deadline.

If interested, you may also sign up via email to our mailing list for the latest news and updates of all future competitions.

On behalf of the **ArkxSite** team, we welcome you and wish all the participating architecture students and young architects the very best of luck in the competition.

The **ArkxSite** Team

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