

# ARCHINFO

ARKKITEHTUURIN TIEDOTUSKESKUS • ARCHINFO FINLAND

## OPEN CALL FOR EXHIBITION PROPOSALS

Pavilion of Finland  
17th International Architecture Exhibition  
La Biennale di Venezia

Application Guidelines

Stage 1: 12 June – 8 August 2019

Stage 2: 16 August – 10 September 2019

Stage 3: 12–13 September 2019

# OPEN CALL IN BRIEF

Archinfo Finland is looking for exhibition proposals for the Pavilion of Finland at the 17th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia. The Biennale Architettura runs from 23 May to 29 November 2020 (preview days 21–22 May).

With the 2020 exhibition in the Pavilion of Finland, we seek to address and communicate about architecture's importance in shaping our cultures and societies. We are looking forward to a wide range of exhibition proposals that stem from topical issues relevant to Finnish architecture while resonating with a wide international audience and the global architecture community. The winning proposal will be suited for presentation in the context of the Venice Biennale and will take into consideration the special nature of the Pavilion itself.

The exhibition will be chosen by a Selection Panel including Beatrice Galilee, independent curator based in New York, Anniina Koivu, writer, curator and educator based in Milan and Lausanne, Tuomas Siitonen, architect, graphic designer and exhibition designer based in Helsinki, Ilkka Suppanen, architect and designer based in Milan and Helsinki, and Hanna Harris, commissioner, director of Archinfo Finland and chair of the panel.

The selection process takes place in three stages:

## Stage 1: Open Call for submitting proposals

12 June – 8 August

## Stage 2: Shortlisted teams develop proposals

16 August – 10 September

A flat fee of 500 euros is available for shortlisted teams to develop their proposal

## Stage 3: Meetings with the Selection Panel

12–13 September

Shortlisted teams from Stage 2 are invited for a 1-hour project presentation and interview

Following the appointment of the winning proposal, the exhibition production starts in October running up to the Biennale opening in May 2020. Archinfo Finland is responsible for overall project management in close collaboration with the appointed team. The appointed project has a starting budget of 40,000 euros towards team fees and exhibition expenses.

Link to the Open Call website: [archinfo.fi/en/venice-biennale/open-call](https://archinfo.fi/en/venice-biennale/open-call)

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# 1 BIENNALE ARCHITETTURA

The International Architecture Exhibition has been organised in Venice since 1980. It alternates with the International Art Exhibition, which was established in 1895. The architecture exhibition has developed into the most esteemed international arena for showcasing architecture, with visitor figures growing every year (275 000 in 2018).

The 17th International Architecture Exhibition will run from 23 May to 29 November 2020 (preview days 21–22 May). The Biennale has appointed architect and scholar [Hashim Sarkis](#) to curate the International Exhibition.

“The world is putting new challenges in front of architecture,” stated Sarkis. “I look forward to working with participating architects from around the world to imagine together how we are going to rise to these challenges.” Sarkis will be responsible for the main exhibition, the theme of which will be announced by the Biennale in summer 2019.

More information on the Biennale website at [labiennale.org/en/architecture/2020](http://labiennale.org/en/architecture/2020).

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## 2 PAVILION OF FINLAND

The Pavilion of Finland is situated in the Giardini in Venice. It was designed by architect [Alvar Aalto](#) (1898–1976) and completed in 1956, which makes it a historically and culturally prestigious pavilion building. Aalto designed a wedge-shaped structure to be assembled of light, demountable wall and roof units made in Finland and transported to Italy. The idea was that it could be dismantled and stored between exhibitions or re-erected on another site. However, it has remained in place since it was first assembled in the summer of 1956.

The Pavilion has undergone three major restorations, last in 2012, following damage caused by a large tree falling on it. The interior consists exclusively of an exhibition room of approx 80 square metres and is lit by a system of longitudinal ‘lock’ skylights, which Aalto tried out here for the first time. The dark blue wooden facade units are supported from outside by large triangles painted white for contrast. From 1962 through 2007 the Pavilion was rented to other countries, but since then, with support from the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, similarly as in the first six years of the Pavilion, it has been used for Finnish exhibitions as part of the Biennale programme.

More information and material on the Pavilion may be found here: [tinyurl.com/Open-Call-VB20](http://tinyurl.com/Open-Call-VB20).

### 3 COMMISSIONER

The exhibition at the 17th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia is commissioned and organised by [Archinfo Finland](#).

In operation since 2013, Archinfo Finland is a collaboration and intermediary organisation in the field of architecture. We are one of the eight information centres in the arts supported by the Finnish government. Our mission is to make Finnish architecture visible and known in Finland and abroad. Through our activities, we increase the social impact of architecture.

The 2020 Biennale is the second time Archinfo Finland is responsible for the exhibition at the Pavilion of Finland – in 2018, Archinfo Finland was appointed by the Ministry of Education and Culture to act as the commissioning body for the first time. The resulting exhibition [Mind-Building](#) was a study of over 100 years of Finnish library architecture leading up to the opening of the new Helsinki Central Library Oodi in December 2018. The exhibition received a record-breaking number of visitors and was enthusiastically received among international media and the architectural community alike.

Link to the Mind-Building exhibition: [mind-building.fi](http://mind-building.fi).

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### 4 SELECTION PANEL

The exhibition at the Alvar Aalto Pavilion of Finland will be chosen by a Selection Panel consisting of the following members:

[Beatrice Galilee](#), independent curator based in New York

[Anniina Koivu](#), writer, curator and educator based in Milan (IT) and Lausanne (CH)

[Tuomas Siitonen](#), architect, graphic designer and exhibition designer based in Helsinki (FI)

[Ilkka Suppanen](#), architect and designer based in Milan (IT) and Helsinki (FI)

[Hanna Harris](#), commissioner, director of Archinfo Finland (chair of the panel)

The Selection Panel reserves the right to consult specialist advisors if necessary. In the event that Archinfo Finland and the Panel are unable to identify an outright winner, the right is reserved not to appoint any team, to reissue the brief, or to extend the period for applications.

## 5 SELECTION CRITERIA

### Proposal criteria

With the 2020 exhibition in the Alvar Aalto Pavilion of Finland, we seek to address and communicate about architecture's importance in shaping our cultures and societies. We are looking forward to a wide range of exhibition proposals that stem from topical issues in or relevant to Finnish architecture while resonating with a wide international audience and the global architecture community.

The winning proposal will be suited for presentation in the context of the Venice Biennale while taking into consideration the scale and limitations of the exhibition pavilion itself. Furthermore, we wish to appoint a project that seriously works toward a sustainable delivery of an international exhibition in Venice.

We are looking for exhibition proposals that are

- topical and engaging presentations of contemporary architecture and architectural culture in or relating to Finland
- relevant in the context of the Venice Biennale
- relevant to current architectural discourse
- deliverable for the Alvar Aalto Pavilion within the available budget (see p. 8)
- sustainable to produce
- aware of the Biennale's theme that will be announced over the summer
- aware of possibilities for outreach back in Finland

### Team criteria

We will accept submissions by individuals or cross-disciplinary teams that may include, e.g. architects, researchers, writers, artists, curators or critics. The proposal should state a lead applicant who takes on the role of the curator and/or team leader to manage the project. The curator or project leader must have experience in exhibitions and in managing and reporting on complex projects. Archinfo Finland can also assist in identifying curatorial support for the team should this be required. The team must include one or more members who are Finnish citizens or based in Finland.

The team must be committed to realising the project within the agreed schedule and budget and able to participate in regular meetings with the team members and with the commissioner.

We are looking for a team that

- has an understanding of exhibiting architecture and is willing to develop its exhibition practices with Archinfo Finland further
- has experience of exhibiting, curating or working on exhibitions in Finland or internationally
- is confident in public speaking
- can commit to and participate in a significant press and marketing campaign
- is able to produce clear and engaging writing about the project

## 6 HOW TO APPLY

### Stage 1: Proposals 12 June – 8 August

In Stage 1, we are looking for concise and expressive ideas for the exhibition in the Pavilion.

All applicants need to submit:

- Application Form including a project description
- A3 format PDF file (max 3 pages) of visual material

The information to be filled out in the Application Form includes: working title of the project, one-liner describing the idea (max 200 characters including spaces), description of the project (max 3,000 characters), team composition including named curator and/or team leader and short biographies (it is not mandatory to list all exhibitors at this stage), links to portfolios or other relevant work and ideas for possible collaborators or partners.

The PDF file containing the visual material should not exceed 30 Mb. The material may include, e.g. drawings, photos, collages or mood boards illustrating the idea. No precise technical drawings are required at this stage, however keeping in mind the feasibility of the project.

All submission documents should be in English.

The two files should be named using the working title of the project as following: "VB20\_Stage1\_Working\_Title\_form" and "VB20\_Stage1\_Working\_Title\_visuals". Both documents should be submitted via email, using WeTransfer if needed, to [venice@archinfo.fi](mailto:venice@archinfo.fi).

The deadline for submitting Stage 1 proposals is 8 August 2019 by midnight (GMT+2).

### Stage 2: Shortlisted proposals 16 August – 10 September

In Stage 2, shortlisted teams (up to 6 teams) are expected to further develop their idea from Stage 1 into a more detailed exhibition plan.

Shortlisted teams will be notified by 16 August. Archinfo Finland will provide shortlisted teams with individual feedback and instructions for developing the proposal. All shortlisted teams will be invited to meet the Selection Panel in Stage 3.

Shortlisted teams need to submit:

- developed project description and an idea for the exhibition publication (max 5,000 characters) in a text file, also including an estimated budget breakdown
- A3 format PDF file (3–6 pages) with more detailed illustrations of how the idea will be installed in the Pavilion

A flat fee of 500 euros will be offered to each shortlisted team to develop the proposal.

The deadline for submitting Stage 2 proposals is 10 September 2019 by midnight (GMT+2).

## Stage 3: Meetings with Selection Panel 12–13 September

Meetings with the Selection Panel are organised in Helsinki on 12–13 September 2019. Representative(s) of each shortlisted team are invited for a 1-hour session, during which the team has 10 minutes to present the developed proposal. The presentation is followed by an interview with the Selection Panel.

Following the meetings, the Selection Panel will choose the winning project and Archinfo Finland appoint the team to deliver the exhibition.

## Material Bank

All material needed for applying may be found at the Material Bank at [tinyurl.com/Open-Call-VB20](https://tinyurl.com/Open-Call-VB20):

- drawings, 3D model and photos of the Pavilion
- Pavilion manual (including information on restrictions for inside & outside use)
- Application Guidelines
- Application Form

## Questions

Questions concerning the practicalities of the Open Call can be sent at the latest 25 June by midnight (GMT+2) to [venice@archinfo.fi](mailto:venice@archinfo.fi). All questions and answers will be published (anonymously) by 2 July at [archinfo.fi/en/venice-biennale/open-call](https://archinfo.fi/en/venice-biennale/open-call).

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# 7 SCHEDULE

## Selection:

- 12 June ●●●●●●●● Open Call for proposals opens
- 25 June ●●●●●●●● Deadline for questions, by midnight (GMT+2)
- 2 July ●●●●●●●● Questions and answers published on the Open Call website
- 8 Aug ●●●●●●●● Deadline for Stage 1 submissions, by midnight (GMT+2)
- 16 Aug ●●●●●●●● Shortlisted teams invited to develop their proposals
- 10 Sept ●●●●●●●● Deadline for Stage 2 submissions, by midnight (GMT+2)
- 12–13 Sept ●●●●●●●● Stage 3 meetings with the Selection Panel
- 18 Sept ●●●●●●●● Selected team notified

## Production:

- Sept–Oct 2019 ●●●●● Appointing the team
- Oct 2019 – May 2020 ●●●●● Production including regular team meetings with Archinfo Finland
- May 2020 ●●●●●●●● Installation and preparations for the opening

## Biennale Architettura:

- 21–22 May 2020 ●●●●● Preview days and opening party in Venice
- 23 May – 29 Nov ●●●●● Biennale Architettura open to the public

## 8 ROLES AND RESOURCES

Archinfo Finland is responsible for overall production in close collaboration with the appointed team.

Archinfo Finland provides:

- project management and programming
- management of the graphic design of all visual and printed materials
- publisher for the production and distribution of the exhibition publication
- PR, media relations and marketing, including publicity material, e.g. photography and digital content
- travel and accommodation
- logistics for material transportation and building and installing the exhibition
- control of budget and fundraising

The appointed team is required to:

- develop and deliver the final exhibition concept including the exhibition design
- produce written and visual material about the exhibition for marketing purposes
- take part in the exhibition publication production to be defined by the concept
- take part in regular production meetings from October 2019 to May 2020
- take part in fundraising
- take part in the PR campaign before the exhibition opening and act as spokespeople throughout the Biennale
- be present in Venice during the preview days 21–22 May 2020

### Fees and budget

During the application process, a fee of 500 euros will be offered to the teams selected to Stage 2 to cover the development expenses.

The appointed project has a starting budget of 40,000 euros towards team fees and exhibition expenses. All exhibition proposals should include an estimate of the budget breakdown of these exhibition expenses. The exhibition budget does not include building and installing, transport, travel and accommodation, PR and marketing or production staff.

The main supporter of the exhibition is the Ministry of Education and Culture in Finland. Additional support comes from partners and patrons. The appointed team is required to assist Archinfo Finland in fundraising for the exhibition. This will include identifying partners suited for the selected project and attending at possible partner events.

**ARCHINFO**

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