

NEW EUROPEAN BAUHAUS

INVESTMENT

GUIDELINES

The Guidelines set the basis for how and why investments in built environment projects can be aligned with the New European Bauhaus.

They provide guidance on how to put NEB values and principles in practice in the various aspects of investment and project preparation, and concrete recommendations.

The NEB Investment Guidelines are the outcome of close cooperation between the European Commission and JASPERS (Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions), an advisory programme funded by the European Commission and the European Investment Bank.



NEB Core Value	Key competences	Key project development stages
Working Principles	Depending on the scope of the competition	Conception ■■
		Design ■■■
		Implementation ■
		Use ■

20. INTEGRATE NEB VALUES AND PRINCIPLES IN ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN COMPETITIONS

The integration of NEB values and principles in architectural design competitions can lead to holistically designed projects of outstanding quality, while helping transform architectural practice in general.

Relevance to investors

Architectural design competitions provide a professionally driven process to identify best solutions for the defined needs. The integration of NEB values and principles in design competitions can help select architectural proposals that are characterised by high aesthetic quality while targeting significant environmental and social impacts. They can help investors further increase the quality and attractiveness of their assets, improve their reputation, increase their visibility and ensure that the projects will be well-received by the local communities.

Description

Architectural design competitions are some of the most efficient ways to foster high quality and creativity in built environment projects. They provide formal, professionally driven procedures, that enable the identification of the best solution for the defined needs. They produce high-quality outcomes that benefit end-users and communities, including some of the most culturally significant buildings across the world. Architectural design competitions are also very popular within the architects' community as they provide opportunities for ambitious and innovative projects.

In this respect the integration of NEB values and principles in the preparation and conduct of architectural design competitions led both by the public and the private sector has a very strong potential to inform architectural practice in general, and to lead to enduring, innovative, and environmentally and socially responsible solutions.

Architectural design competitions provide a process of selecting optimal solutions for the given needs, helping investors shape projects characterised by design excellence.

Competition brief

The efficient preparation of the competition brief is highly significant because it includes all instructions for competitors participating in the design competition, such as the definition of the competition's objectives, the evaluation

criteria, the eligibility criteria and others. At this stage it is possible to enhance alignment to NEB values and principles in the following ways:

- **Set up a multidisciplinary team of experts to prepare the competition brief**, related always to the specific project type, context and scale. The team of experts might include designers, planners, social experts, sustainability or ecology experts, accessibility experts, public participation experts, and others. It is suggested that the team also includes representatives of the city or municipality.
- **Engage with the local community and stakeholders** already from that early stage, in order to efficiently set the competition's scope, objectives and draft evaluation criteria tailored to the local needs.
- **Require the multidisciplinary composition of the competing teams**, that should combine competences that are necessary to tackle the competition's objectives, while addressing all NEB values and principles.
- **Set up competitions for young architects or students**, in order to support and give opportunities to local youths to express themselves.

The engagement of professionals with diverse expertise, as well as representatives of the city administration and local community, helps to correctly set the scope and terms of the competition, maximising the potential for highly innovative and impactful design proposals.

Evaluation criteria

Setting evaluation criteria that address all NEB core values and working principles simultaneously supports holistic thinking and design. The evaluation criteria should be tailored based on the characteristics and needs of each project, but some examples include:

Criteria on "Beautiful":

- employment of original and innovative aesthetic language that serves contemporary needs (e.g., circularity, sufficiency, etc.)
- integration of local materials and construction techniques
- fostering local identity and a sense of belonging
- preservation and promotion of tangible and intangible heritage
- improvement of connection to nature

Criteria on "Sustainable":

- contribution to circularity (reuse of buildings, open spaces, structural elements or materials, use of biobased materials, design for modularity, adaptability and disassembly, etc.)
- contribution to climate mitigation and adaptation
- protection of existing green and blue infrastructure, or creation of new, and integration of Nature-based Solutions
- fostering of biodiversity

Criteria on "Together":

- reinforcement of physical and cognitive accessibility
- contribution to walkability and sustainable multi-modal mobility
- design for density, mixed-use and proximity
- design for affordability
- response to the particular needs of the community
- design for vulnerable groups (women, children, older people, migrants, etc.)
- promotion of social innovation

Criteria on "Working principles":

- level of engagement of communities during the preparation of the design proposal

- collective asset governance and organisation models
- degree of collaboration and knowledge sharing implemented during the project design and foreseen during the project's execution and operation
- educational potential of the project, due to its design process and during its operation

The inclusion of evaluation criteria that address all NEB core values and working principles increases the possibilities that the winning proposals will be highly innovative and aesthetically appealing, but also sustainable and socially inclusive.

Jury composition

The competitors should be guaranteed a professional evaluation of their submitted work through a transparent process. In this respect the majority of the jury members shall be qualified design professionals related to the competition task, including, for example, architects, landscape architects, urban designers and urban planners. Some actions that can further reinforce alignment to the NEB values and principles are:

- **Include jury experts outside the design industry**, such as social experts, ecologists, accessibility experts, public participation experts and others, depending on the scope of each competition.
- **Include in the jury representatives of the community or end users** or add in the evaluation grid an element of public voting, allowing the broader public to support their preferred projects.

The involvement of experts from diverse disciplines in the jury ensures the multi-dimensional evaluation of the project. The involvement of community representatives in the evaluation of proposals increases the possibility that end users will embrace the project and reduces possible opposition risks by the community during the project's implementation.

Impacts, benefits and challenges

Horizontal investment benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appreciation of asset value. The integration of criteria that address the NEB values and principles in architectural competitions leads to top quality projects of high cultural, environmental and social value. - Reputation and visibility. The preparation and execution of ambitious architectural design competitions, and the implementation of projects characterised by design excellence, innovation and environmental and social responsibility can increase the visibility of investors and improve their reputation. - Procedural gains. The inclusion of community and end user representatives in the preparation of the competition brief and during the evaluation of proposals increases the possibility that the project will be embraced by the community and by future users and pre-empt potential objections.
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Investment challenges and mitigants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional procedural efforts and time. The integration of NEB criteria in architectural design competitions requires additional efforts and time for the preparation of the contest tenders and the evaluation of the submitted proposals. This can be mitigated by looking for inspiration and guidance from similar projects, or via knowledge-exchange networks and partnerships. It is also important to plan for efficient time and resources for the preparation of the competition. - Coordination effort. The integration of NEB criteria in architectural competitions requires the dynamic and potentially challenging collaboration among diverse professionals, as well as the collaboration among representatives of the city, the community and the organising entity. This can be mitigated by allocating efficient resources to project management and using mediation techniques to facilitate communication among stakeholders.
Socio-economic impacts on community and users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of life. The integration of NEB values and principles in architectural design competitions provides opportunities for communities to participate in defining needs and evaluating projects that transform their localities. - Creativity and innovation. Architectural competitions promote innovation and design excellence. The integration of NEB criteria can further push the limits of the proposed solutions, prioritising inclusiveness, environmentally sustainability, community representation and transdisciplinarity. - Education. The integration of NEB values in architectural design competitions supports the creation of a new generation of architects driven by social and environment responsibility.

Useful sources

1. Architects' Council of Europe (2023). Recommendations for Architectural Design Contests. Available at: https://www.ace-cae.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/ADC_Recommendations_Singles.pdf
2. Architects' Council of Europe (2018). Best examples of architectural design competitions in Europe. Available at: https://www.ace-cae.eu/fileadmin/New_Upload/7_Publications/Others/2018/ACE_Meilleurs_exemples_de_projets_architecturaux_2018_WEB.pdf
3. UIA. UIA Competition Guide for Design Competitions in Architecture and Related Fields (2020). Available at: https://www.uia-architectes.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/2_UIA_competition_guide_2020.pdf

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