



# COMPETITION BRIEF

**URBAN DESIGN COMPETITION FOR AN URBAN INTERVENTION IN VLORA  
WATERFRONT PROMENADE**

ATELIER ALBANIA

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#### **Promoter**

Ministry of Urban Development and Tourism has classified the Ionian Coast and the city of Vlorë as the site to apply a flagship project for the promotion of tourism during the coming season.

#### **Beneficiary**

Municipality of Vlorë is the direct beneficiary of this flagship project. It will be the main partner during the process of design and public works execution.

#### **Implementing Unit**

National Territorial Planning Agency (Atelier Albania) - as the policy executing unit of the Ministry of Urban Development and Tourism, will draft and follow-up the process. AA will facilitate the process for the winning parties by providing services towards project implementation.

#### **Objective**

To pilot an instrument of urban intervention in the urban coastal area of Albania, in order to serve as a model of intervention in other 4 urban and non-urban coastal cases along the 420 km long coast line.

#### **Aim and Nature of Intervention**

To introduce a way of intervening by design in the upgrading of the City Waterfront Promenade. The intervention will be of an *urban upgrade* nature and will be based on the surface application of urban furnishing elements and upgrading network infrastructure throughout the site of intervention. This will be marked by a strong linear and continuous structure like the promenade itself, which is partly existing and partly to be designed and implemented.

#### **The Site**

The competition area, named in this document as the *Waterfront Promenade*, is a 5 km long coastal band that lays territorially from the 'Soda Woods' (west) till the Tunnel (south), and bends at the Port Area as it reaches the city central area.

Competitors are asked to generate visionary and original urban design concepts and designs for the whole waterfront band, jump-starting a process that aspires the transformation of an entire waterfront pedestrian experience.

### **Design Opportunities**

The Waterfront Promenade is composed of two segments. The port is the hinge that connects or stands in-between them. These two segments are facing two totally different urban conditions. Therefore, they have very different identity and should be approached in a different way. They can respectively be named as the *West Segment* (Old Beach Area, west of port, reaching 'Soda Woods') and *South Segment* (New Beach Promenade, south of port, reaching the Tunnel).

The South Segment is a narrow one but very well defined, and it stands in-between an existing road and the sea. This road connects the city to the touristic Ionian region, and it holds actually the status of a national connector, as it is the only existing road. There are plans for national by-pass that will avoid traffic in this segment, but also plans for an alternative municipal street that will make possible a traffic-free area in the South Segment. Till then, traffic will have to flow parallel/along the Promenade.

The South Segment not under very fine urban conditions, even though it already has some sub-segments that offer different programs that are mostly used especially during the long Ionian summer. This segment has gained some extra space lately due to the fact that certain buildings are cleared out, giving back the public space to the city. *Therefore, the whole set of sub-segments need to be integrated, harmonized and upgraded in terms of urban furnishing elements and existing underground infrastructure network.* This will make a beautification process and most probably will constitute the **short term intervention**.

Within this perspective the competitors are asked to analyse and propose sectors within the South Segment that might be part of a first and immediate implementation set of projects, aiming at having a touristic impact by summer 2014.

While, on the other hand the West Segment is wider and sandy, facing traditionally touristic structures as well as lately erected high-rise residential structures. This newly built structures have not a designed urban border or an urban element as a mediator. The city road network reaches the West Segment from behind the building stock. This fact gives a pedestrian feature to the West Segment. *The intervention in this segment will be to introduce the promenade and to define the urban border that will connect the sandy/ beach area to the urbanized area.* The underground infrastructure network of this segment has to be introduced and integrated with the rest of the system. This will constitute the **long term intervention**.

Here as well, within the West Segment band, the competitors are asked to analyse and propose sectors that might be part of a first and immediate implementation set of projects, aiming at having a touristic impact by summer 2014.

### **Atelier Albania Methodology**

Vlora is one of the most beautiful coastal urban sites in the Albanian coast. It attracts quite a large number of tourists every season but also during the entire year, especially during weekends. These

are facts that make Vlora receive a lot of public attention. Therefore the design of the Waterfront promenade should be a product of not a single designer or a single studio. It should be a product of a collective public opinion through an instrument that ensures the expression of interest of many designers, finalized by an open and transparent selection of the wide public facilitated by the local and international expertise.

An international, open, one stage, [partly] anonymous urban design competition would be the right instrument to guarantee the aimed product. The call for participation will be open to all national and international designers, but also to team of about to graduate students of architecture, urban design or landscape design programs. There will be awarded two winning prizes, one for the best design and the other for the best local team/designer. The winner that will be contracted to execute the design will be a team composed of those two winners, the best design winning team and the best local team/designer. The final product will be negotiated between them and the promoter (implementing unit/ Atelier Albania). The city of Vlora, as the beneficiary, will be active and part of the process throughout its duration.

### **Expected outcomes**

*High quality design:* The deliverables of the Competition will be handed over in a short period of time but the results are expected to be of high quality.

*Building of local capacities:* Atelier Albania aims at teaming up one international and one local designer or design team for the implementation of the first design phase and the detailing of the second design phase. It is strongly believed that working closely with international experts will have an influence in building design capacities of local designers. While on the other hand, this close collaboration will guarantee that international experts will build deep local knowledge and will have a continuous presence on site.

*Ease of detailed design process and implementation:* teaming up of the international and local designers will guarantee a direct connection with the site throughout the design and implementation period, as well as easiness of conduct towards real-time problem-solving approach.

### **End Product**

The design proposals will be focused on two different products, one aiming the *short term intervention* and the other aiming a *long term vision* (detailed above also in terms of localization).

The *short term aimed design proposal*, corresponding to each competitor's customized selection of parts within the West and South Segment, is about to be implemented immediately, following the guidelines given by the competition design, in order to have the flagship project of the Vlora coast visible and ready to be appreciated by the visitors of the coming touristic season of 'Summer 2014'.

While the *long term vision*, corresponding to rest of the parts within the West and South Segment, will be detailed following the competition process, by the teamed-up winners (local and international winners) and will be implemented on a second and maybe third phase of intervention in order to have the Vlora Waterfront Promenade completed expectedly the very next touristic season of 'Summer 2015'.

## **Inclusive Process**

In order to achieve an urban design intervention that will be accepted and embraced first of all by Vlora citizens and also by tourists visiting the city, QUESTIONNAIRES have been prepared and delivered to citizens and tourists, aiming at getting design guidelines for the Waterfront Promenade.

The results of these questionnaires will be made available to the competition subscribers, together with the rest of the base material.

## **Competition Process**

The competition will be **AN OPEN CALL TO PARTICIPATE**.

It will be **FREE OF CHARGE**.

It will be OPEN to every **LOCAL** (Albanian) and **INTERNATIONAL DESIGNER** or team of designers that are willing to contribute on the process of improvement of Vlora Waterfront Promenade.

It will be OPEN to every **TEAM OF ARCHITECTURE AND LANDSCAPE DESIGN STUDENTS** about to graduate.

It is a **ONE STAGE** competition.

It is [partly] **ANONYMOUS** competition.

Selection will be based on **URBAN DESIGN INTERVENTION PROPOSALS**.

Selection will be performed by an **INTERNATIONAL JURY** of five members. They will be mainly architects, urban planners and/or landscape designers of international and local reputation.

The names of Jury Members will be made public two weeks to Competition Deadline

**Jury Session** will be organized in **two steps**: anonymous pre-selection/ short-listing of 15 best designs and, final disclosed selection of four winners.

## **Competition Communication**

All communications, including questions, must be made by e-mail directly to e-mail address: [vlorawaterfront@gmail.com](mailto:vlorawaterfront@gmail.com). A copy of all questions and responses will be e-mailed to all Stage II competitors.

## **Submission Requirements**

### **A. Panels**

Competitors will be required to submit a maximum of eight (6) panels, each of which should be mounted on a rigid lightweight board, ISO AO - 841 x 1189 mm, which must contain the following:

- Site Plan/s of appropriate scale;
- At least four (4) sectional drawings;
- Partial plan(s) of selected segments;

- Design plan or plans illustrating details and key features at appropriate scales;
- Four (4) perspectives or axonometrics showing the Site in urban context;
- Four (4) drawings showing eye-level perspective views of key design areas.

## B. Report

In addition, each submission must also be accompanied by an A4 bound report containing the following:

- A description of the design concept (supporting diagrams and images are permitted), on a maximum of twenty-five (25) pages;
- An outline specification covering materials and methods of construction of short term and long term intervention (maximum 12 pages);
- A list of all members of the design team, their roles, and an identification of the contact person with their business address, business telephone number and business e-mail address; and
- Reduced scale A4 copies of the panels.

## C. Model

Competitors must submit a three dimensional model of the proposed Short Term Intervention design of their selection, at 1:1000 scale.

An overall site model is not obligatory, but if competitors decide to submit one, it should not exceed A0 format.

## Competition Submission

All competition submissions must include one (1) copy of each panel requested and seven (7) copies of the report. All submissions must be securely wrapped. Submission shall be addressed to the official mailing address of the competition that will be available on website. Submissions must be received during normal business hours.

## Eligibility

The competition is open to all professional architects, landscape architects, urban planners and engineers

The competition is also open to teams of about to graduate students who are mentored by a licenced architect/landscape architect/ urban planner, or a university/ academy instructor.

All entrants are required to provide evidence of relevant professional registration, accreditation or membership in the Experience Statement.

Where an entry is made by a joint venture, consortium or team of professionals, the team must be led by a person meeting the above criteria. This team member must be identified on the Application Form as the entrant. The application form will be available on competition website.

Each competitor team is encouraged to include an architect, landscape architect, a visual artist, structural engineer, mechanical engineer and electrical engineer. All team members are to be identified in the Application Form.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

Each of the 15 short-listed design proposals is going to be reviewed in a jury process and the jurors will be asked to base their decisions on three basic principles:

- Activate the site for the benefit of the public's enjoyment;
- Exhibit architectural excellence; and
- Provide development feasibility.

The judgment given by the jury will verify conformity to the programme and its functional requests, respect of the competition objects, technical practicability and respect of existing norms. In particular, the jury will examine submissions considering the following criteria, which are fundamental for the promoting Institution:

- Overall urban and landscape design quality of the project considering, at the same time, both functionality of space and organizational distribution, aesthetic quality and symbolic value;
- Quality of pedestrian areas and their capacity to allow better accessibility and foster integration with the surrounding urban areas;
- Quality of open spaces for public events in relationship, too, with innovative utilization of local materials;
- Quality of Integration and relation between art and urban design;
- Quality of providing parking solutions, traffic and traffic free mobility schemes.

### **Competition Awards**

There will be awarded a first prize, a second and a third prize. There will also be a special prize for the best local team design.

First Design Prize: 10,000 E

Second Design Prize: 5,000 E

Third Design Prize: 3,000 E

Best Local Team Prize: 5,000 E

### **Competition Calendar**

2013

**November 28**

**Official Launch**

The site, aim and general rules of the competition will be announced

[www.vlorawaterfront.al](http://www.vlorawaterfront.al)

The complete set of materials will be made available

December 14

Organized Site Visit

Meeting with the Prime Minister, Minister of Urban Development,  
Mayor of Vlora and Atelier Albania (organizers)

2014

January 25

Question period ends

**January 28**

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION**

JURY EVALUATION

January 31

Anonymous Short-listing of 15 best designs

February 1, 2

Disclosed Jury evaluation of 15 best designs

**February 2**

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF WINNERS**