

ar*x-ellence:03

International Transdisciplinary Architectural Ideas Competition

Outline of the Competition Brief



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1. Introduction

Arxellence 3 is an International, Transdisciplinary, Open, One-Stage Architectural & Environmental Ideas Competition that welcomes a visionary and transdisciplinary approach for a sustainable abandoned and protected Island in the Aegean Sea.

Nowadays, there is a common misconception that "deep conservation" and "deep social preservation" equate to overregulation practices. In sustainability matters, this misconception often excludes new ideas, technology, and research. Arxellence 3 aims to overcome this fact by inviting fresh ideas that can foster a new perspective for the future.

1.1. A brief history of Gyaros island

Gyaros, also known locally as Gioura (pronounced: jaros), is an arid and uninhabited island in the northern Cyclades near Andros and Tinos. Spanning 23 square kilometers, it is part of the municipality of Ano Syros, mainly located on the island of Syros.

Ancient years & Mythology

The island was an autonomous city-state in ancient Greece, with a permanent population that is believed to have eventually abandoned it due to an infestation of rats.

Greek Mythology: There are references to the worship of the goddesses Aphrodite and Artemis. According to Homer, Poseidon sank Ajax here as punishment for his disrespect towards the gods.

A place of exile

Already in Roman times, Gyaros became a place of exile and displacement. People considered dangerous to the emperors of the day were sent here. This would become its identity throughout the centuries.

After World War II, during the Greek Civil War, thousands of political prisoners, mostly Communists, were deported to Gyaros. In 1947, thousands of prisoners lived in tents. The prisoners were forced to begin constructing the prison themselves. Each day, thousands of them, under extremely harsh conditions, were digging rocks and building their prison.

During 1967 – 1974, a period when Greece was under military dictatorship (Junta), the Gyaros prison, which had been closed under international outcry in the 1950s, was reused. Thousands of dissidents were exiled there, suffering torture and living under inhumane conditions. It should be noted that during the Greek Junta period, for the first time, women were imprisoned on the island as well. It is also worth stressing that the island still has the buildings of the prisons, the hospital, and the power plant constructed by the political prisoners.

In 2001, the Ministry of Culture declared Gyaros a historical site in need of special state protection. The prison building and all the facilities and structures located in the five bays of the island are classified as protected monuments.

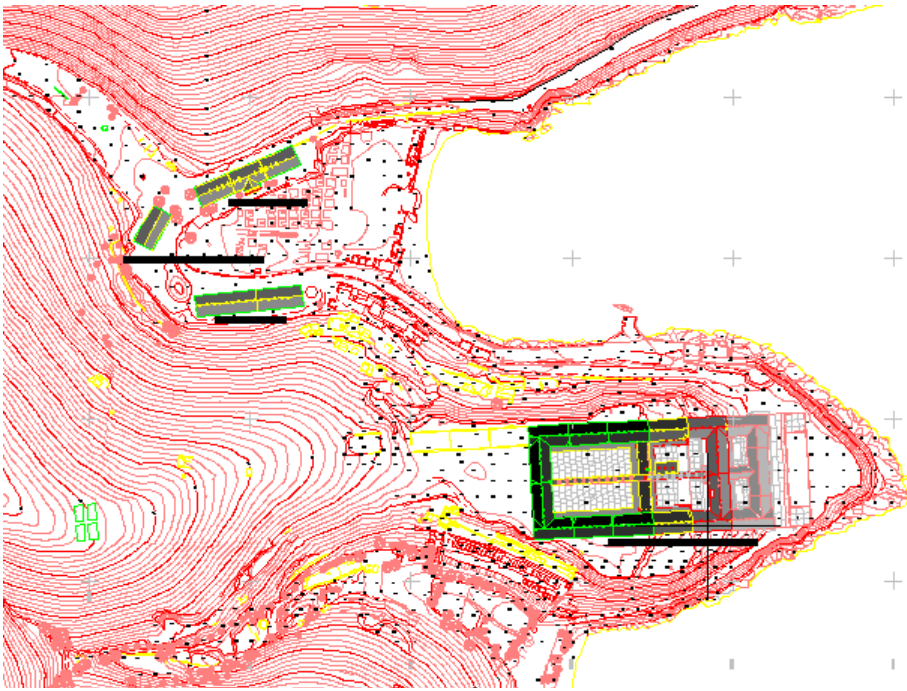
Ecological haven

Amidst the silence of this uninhabited area, nature thrives, unhindered and undisturbed by human activity. Beneath the sea's surface lies a wealth of natural beauty, with impressive coral formations and fields of Posidonia creating a magnificent underwater landscape.

Another important aspect of the island's environmental value is that 12% of the population of one of the most endangered mammals, the monk seal (*Monachus Monachus*), currently lives and breeds on the beaches and in the caves of Gyaros. In 2011, the island was included in the European network of protected areas "Natura 2000". The island is currently off-limits to the public, and the Coast Guard prohibits fishing near it.

Check the position of the island [here](#).





2. Objectives of the Arxellence 3 Competition

The primary objective of Arxellence 3 is to select concept design ideas for a **Research Hub, a living laboratory¹ that will become a beacon for developing biodiversity strategies and related innovative approaches in the eastern Mediterranean.** The **key components** which should be **taken into consideration** regarding the design are:

1. **The Museum as an Interactive Space of Memories that will include a permanent exhibition and a library with books, photos, and documents.** The Museum will also contain a research and academic center conducting educational activities and providing space for conferences and temporary exhibitions.
2. **The Laboratory** for the development of strategies and innovative approaches for biodiversity preservation, environmental impacts, and sustainability. Typically, the Laboratory can consist of an Entrance, Conference Rooms, Terrace, Restaurant, Kitchen, Atriums, Office Space, Storage, Workshop Areas, and Laboratory/Experiment Space. The Laboratory could be located in the main building or any other location suggested by the Participants. We suggest that the Laboratory should not exceed 1500 to 2000 square meters.
3. **The Dormitory**, with a capacity of up to 100 individuals, is intended for researchers, staff, and selected visitors.
4. **The Research Institute** will conduct its activities within the Laboratory (No2) through researchers who will remain on the island for specific periods of time (e.g., 6 months, 1 year, etc.), according to the needs of each research activity and/or initiative.
5. **A holistic approach to environmental issues** combining design, planning, and strategic actions that will take into consideration a variety of factors (e.g., water resources management, green energy, agri-food actions, biodiversity policies and strategies, ecosystem services, etc.) through an interlinked nexus² approach, in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)³.

The following points (No6 to No12) constitute more detailed specifications of the main components essential for the holistic approach described under No. 5:

6. **The Water Cycle:** historical data⁴ and climate change projections should be considered for the design and planning of water supply for domestic use and water management, e.g., through rain harvesting and/or

¹ **Living Labs** are open innovation ecosystems in real-life environments using iterative feedback processes throughout a lifecycle approach of an innovation to create sustainable impact. They focus on co-creation, rapid prototyping & testing and scaling-up innovations & businesses, providing (different types of) joint-value to the involved stakeholders. In this context, living labs operate as intermediaries/orchestrators among citizens, research organisations, companies and government agencies/levels. Source and definition: <https://enoll.org/>.

² The **Nexus** definition is considered as complying with the official definition of the United Nations. Source: <https://unece.org/environment-policy/water/areas-work-convention/water-food-energy-ecosystem-nexus>

³ The **SDGs** are considered according to the United Nations definition, and more details can be found here: <https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals>

⁴ **Historical data** can be found at these links:

- <https://www.dw.com/el/%CE%B3%CF%85%CE%AC%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%82-%CF%84%CE%BF-%CE%BE%CE%B5%CF%87%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%BC%CE%AD%CE%BD%CE%BF-%CE%BD%CE%B7%CF%83%CE%AF-%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%85-%CE%B4%CE%B9%CE%B1%CE%B2%CF%8C%CE%BB%CE%BF%CF%85/a-39649266>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I7hUcGIVPLE>
- <https://cycladeslife.gr/%CF%80%CE%B5%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%87%CE%AD%CF%82/%CE%B3%CF%85%CE%AC%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%82/>

small dams, groundwater management, or other types of Nature-Based Solutions (NBS)⁵. Flood protection and drought management planning ideas are of major interest for this component.

7. **Agriculture:** the potential of agriculture for specific, suitable crops should be considered in relation to the water management schemes in No6.
8. **The coastal blue ecosystem preservation (Maritime Spatial Planning):** it should be part of the holistic approach under No5, including also (if needed) NBS.
9. **Wastewater treatment schemes** should also consider treated wastewater reuse, energy production through wastewater treatment, and potential material reuse (e.g., phosphates and nitrates) in a broader circular economy context.
10. **Energy Efficiency (Solar, wind, geothermal energy, etc.):** it is crucial to examine the island's energy efficiency through a variety of green energy technologies (including energy production from No8) to achieve (green) energy efficiency for the island, in accordance with the European Green Deal⁶.
11. **The biodiversity strategies**, especially the EU biodiversity strategy for 2030⁷.
12. **Environmental preservation** surveillance initiatives, ongoing actions/projects, and other similar activities that are specifically related to the island.

⁵ NBS definition according to this source: <https://www.iucn.org/our-work/nature-based-solutions#:~:text=Nature%2Dbased%20Solutions%20are%20actions,simultaneously%20benefiting%20people%20and%20nature.>

⁶ European Green Deal goals and targets. Source: https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu-action/european-green-deal_en

⁷ EU biodiversity strategy. Source: https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/biodiversity-strategy-2030_en

3. Regulations

3.1 Sponsor & Organizer

ALUMIL S.A. and the Non-Profit Civil Company **AEGEAS** are the organizers and sponsors of Arxellence 3.

The **Arxellence 3** (Competition) is also **endorsed and co-organized** by the **Technical Chamber of Greece**.

Arxellence 3 is under the **auspices** of:

1. Greek Ministry of Environment and Energy
2. Greek Ministry of Culture
3. Region of South Aegean

Strategic Partner

Natural Environment and Climate Change Agency (N.E.C.C.A.)

Grand Media Sponsor

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archello

Dope Studio

Contact Information:

ALUMIL S.A.

Address: 8, Gogousi str., 56429

Efkarpia, Thessaloniki, Greece

Email: arxellence@alumil.com

3.2 Eligibility

The Competition is open to teams-partnerships with at least one architect from all countries. Architects must be duly licensed to practice architecture in their respective countries to be considered eligible.

Participants may be natural persons, legal entities, or partnerships of individuals. Multidisciplinary teams may participate on condition that they are headed/co-headed by an architect. Participants of any other discipline can participate in any team.

Note: The Competition is not open to students.

The following persons shall not be allowed to participate in the Competition:

- Jury Members
- Technical Committee
- Any person directly or indirectly associated with the Competition Sponsors or the Jury

3.3 Official Language

The official language of the Competition and the submissions is English. Submissions in Greek may also be accepted.

3.4 Registration of Participants

No fees are required for registering.

The Participants shall exclusively register, download all competition documents, and upload their entries on the predefined dates on the website <https://www.alumil.com/arxellence3>

3.5 Jury, Technical Committee & Professional Advisor

The ArXellence 3 International Jury, in collaboration with the Technical Committee and the Professional Advisor, will assess the submitted proposals and ensure they comply with the Competition's criteria, rules, and regulations. After the evaluation period, the Jury will announce the proposals that stood out, awarding prizes and honorary mentions. In an endorsed competition like Arxellence 3, the Jury makes the final decision.

Jury/Alternate Jury

Dr. Amalia Androulidaki
Dr. Panagiotis Balabanis
Dr. Elena Lopez Gunn
Dr. Stella Kyvelou-Chiotini
Dr. Francesco Musco
Dr. Maria P. Papadopoulou
Ar. Sanjay Puri
Georgios Stasinos
Athanasios Martinos
Konstantinos Makedos
Manolis Votsis
Pantelis Leventis
Nikos Salpingidis

Technical Committee

Dr. Evangelos Lyroudias
Konstantinos Belibasakis
Grigorios Drettas
Maria Zourna

Professional Advisor

Dr Evangelos Lyroudias

3.6 Questions and Answers

Participants may ask questions anonymously about the brief until the stipulated deadline for receipt of questions. A technical committee will support legal and local regulation matters.

Participants may, if in doubt, ask a question concerning the interpretation of the conflict-of-interest provisions.

The Technical Committee shall prepare answers after consulting the Competition Sponsors. The answers shall be approved by the Jury and made available to all Participants by the specified date on the Competition's website.

There will be two rounds of questions and answers.

3.7 Prizes

The 3 grand prizes and the 6 honorable mentions of the Competition will be awarded by Jury's vote and will be reflected as follows:

1st Prize - 40.000 €

2nd Prize - 20.000 €

3rd Prize - 10.000 €

x6 Honorable Mentions

3.8 Declaration of Sponsor Intent

Participants are invited to focus on the visionary nature of the Competition. Proposals should aspire to outline a Research Hub that will contribute to the preservation of historical memory and the development of biodiversity strategies and innovative approaches in the eastern Mediterranean.

The scope and objectives of Arxellence 3 are diverse in terms of scientific topics, requiring a transdisciplinary approach and collaboration among different types of experts and knowledge domains. This will also be reflected in the selection of the jury members. Therefore, each participating team should take this into account when selecting their team members and developing their proposal.

The Competition aims to stimulate the State's interest, generating discussion about innovative architectural design, biodiversity, and the best utilization and development of Greek islands. Furthermore, the objective is to attract international interest, bringing new ideas regarding areas with the characteristics of Gyaros, always with respect to historical memory and the environment.

3.9 Jury's Decisions

The Jury's decisions are conclusive and cannot be reviewed or reconsidered by the Sponsors, either wholly or partially.

3.10 Creators' Rights

Unauthorized use of any design is strictly prohibited without the creator's written permission, regardless of whether it relates to a prize or not.

The creator has copyright over the design, and any changes or modifications require prior written consent.

By entering the Competition, participants confirm that they are the sole creators of their project and that their design does not infringe upon any third-party intellectual property rights.

3.11 Publication Rights

The Sponsors can publicize entries, including plans and visuals, as long as they credit the Creators. Participants can also publicize their own entry, but they must mention the Sponsors. However, Participants are not allowed to publish their entry before the Sponsors and/or Jury officially announce the results. Doing so may lead to disqualification.

The Sponsors have the right to use, store, reproduce, display, and publish all submitted projects without the Participants' consent. The names of creators will be mentioned unless Participants request otherwise. Furthermore, the Sponsors may organize exhibitions and publications of all submitted projects, regardless of whether they are winners or not.

By registering an entry, Participants agree to allow the Sponsors to reproduce and promote the submitted material for the Competition's objectives. All publications will include the winning projects to reflect the Jury's decision.

If an exhibition takes place, it should include all entries. However, subsequent exhibitions may only display the winning entries.

3.12 Notifications of Results

The Sponsors will officially notify all award winners (Prizes and honorable Mentions) and publish the Competition results on the Arxcellence 3 website.

3.13 Dispute Resolution

By participating in this Competition, all the Participants agree to abide by these terms and conditions, as well as the terms and conditions that may be imposed in the future.

All disputes relating to this Competition shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of Courts of Thessaloniki-Greece only.

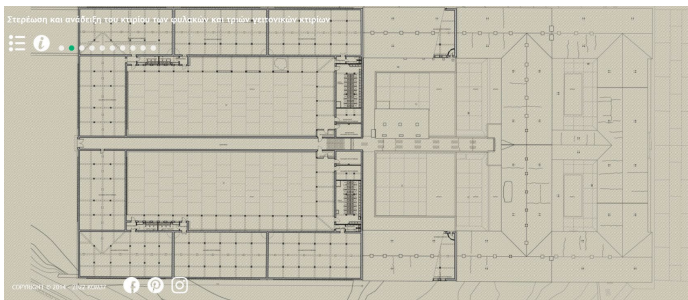
4. Submission

4.1. Requirements

The Architectural Competition Brief outlines specific submission requirements that must be met.

a. A **presentation** that will include 8 slides:

1. Master plan, Transportation, Infrastructure
2. Restoration plan of the buildings (up to 3)



3. Hydraulics / Hydrology /Desalination and Water Treatment Management
4. Energy: Green, Sustainable, Renewable
5. Plantation and Rehabilitation of Soil /Biodiversity /Agriculture
6. Coastal and Maritime (blue economy activities)
7. Optional (business plan/ sustainability financial model)
8. Optional (Workshops / Museum/ Green Bonds/income financial instruments, Green financing)

b. Optional: A **5-minute video** to present ideas regarding the Competition.

Note: Please ensure the submission's anonymity (no faces of the team should be shown).

Submissions vary according to the project's type, cost, and complexity. In general, Participants must supply sufficient information to demonstrate how they have responded to the sponsor's requirements.

4.2. Submission & Anonymity

List of documents provided to Participants

- Maps of Gyaros island
- Aerial view of the site
- Photographic documentation and plans & drawings of the buildings to be retained

Note: Participants can use any satellite pictures downloaded via the internet.

Entries will be submitted in electronic form on the Competition platform from December 9, 2024, to April 14, 2025.

Printing, presentation, publishing, and exhibition costs will be met by ALUMIL S.A. & the Non-Profit Civil Company AEGEAS.

For the preservation of participant anonymity, indicating participant names or other distinguishing signs is prohibited under penalty of disqualification. Participants are allowed to give a title to their proposal.

Participants are asked to register on the official Competition website. All the relevant reference documents are available therein. The Sponsors and ALUMIL's Compliance Department, guarantee anonymity and compliance with GDPR legislation, while making sure that the system, which Dope Studio guarantees, is efficient and suitable for the Competition and will not collapse if many participants submit their entries simultaneously. Nevertheless, it is strongly recommended that participants do not submit a last-minute proposal.

In case of a technical problem, participants may contact immediately arxellence@alumil.com.

Submissions will be open from **09/12/2024 12.00 EEST** to **14/04/2025 23.59 EEST**.

Note: The person who will upload the proposal **must** be an architect - duly licensed to practice architecture in their respective countries.

Moreover, the Sponsors ensure that the entries submitted electronically will be properly registered and secured. The Competition website is <https://www.alumil.com/arxellence3>

4.3. Submission Requirements

As already mentioned above, participants may only submit one entry.

Variations are not accepted. Each entry shall consist of:

- Eight (8) Slides Landscape-orientated to be potentially printed on an A3 dimension
- Entries are to be presented to the JURY as follows:

Each Participant is free to decide for the other (elevations, sections, three-dimensional color views of the proposal).

Participants are free to present their proposal in whatever way they deem best (building program, indicative floor plans, and sections, construction details, sketches, and whatever else they deem appropriate for a better presentation of the proposal). Entrants are free to present any other explanatory sketches, drawings, texts, etc., as long as they conform to the provisions of this document.

The components of the submitted proposals must include:

1. **The Museum as an Interactive Space of Memories that will include a permanent exhibition and a library with books, photos, and documents.** The Museum also will contain a research and academic center conducting educational activities and providing space for conferences and temporary exhibitions.
2. **The Laboratory** for the development of strategies and innovative approaches for biodiversity preservation, environmental impacts, and sustainability. Typically, the Laboratory can consist of an Entrance, Conference Rooms, Terrace, Restaurant, Kitchen, Atriums, Office Space, Storage, Workshop Areas, and Laboratory/Experiment Space. The Laboratory could be located in the main building or any other location suggested by the Participants. We suggest that the Laboratory should not exceed 1500 to 2000 square meters.
3. **The Dormitory**, with a capacity of up to 100 individuals, is intended for researchers, staff, and selected visitors.
4. **The Research Institute** will conduct its activities within the Laboratory (No2) through researchers who will remain on the island for specific periods of time (e.g., 6 months, 1 year, etc.), according to the needs of each research activity and/or initiative.
5. **A holistic approach to environmental issues** combining design, planning, and strategic actions that will take into consideration a variety of factors (e.g., water resources management, green energy, agri-food actions, biodiversity policies and strategies, ecosystem services, etc.) through an interlinked nexus⁸ approach, in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)s⁹.

The following points (No6 to No12) constitute more detailed specifications of the main components essential for the holistic approach described under No. 5:

6. **The Water Cycle:** historical data¹⁰ and climate change projections should be considered for the design and planning of water supply for domestic use and water management, e.g., through rain harvesting and/or small dams, groundwater management, or other types of Nature-Based Solutions (NBS)¹¹. Flood protection and drought management planning ideas are of major interest for this component.
7. **Agriculture:** the potential of agriculture for specific, suitable crops should be considered in relation to the water management schemes in No6.
8. **The coastal blue ecosystem preservation (Maritime Spatial Planning):** it should be part of the holistic approach under No5, including also (if needed) NBS.
9. **Wastewater treatment schemes** should also consider treated wastewater reuse, energy production through wastewater treatment, and potential material reuse (e.g., phosphates and nitrates) in a broader circular economy context.

⁸ The **Nexus** definition is considered as complying with the official definition of the United Nations. Source: <https://unece.org/environment-policy/water/areas-work-convention/water-food-energy-ecosystem-nexus>

⁹ The **SDGs** are considered according to the United Nations definition, and more details can be found here: <https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals>

¹⁰ **Historical data** can be found at these links:

- <https://www.dw.com/el/%CE%B3%CF%85%CE%AC%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%82-%CF%84%CE%BF-%CE%BE%CE%B5%CF%87%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%BC%CE%AD%CE%BD%CE%BF-%CE%BD%CE%B7%CF%83%CE%AF-%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%85-%CE%B4%CE%B9%CE%B1%CE%B2%CF%8C%CE%BB%CE%BF%CF%85/a-39649266>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7hUcGIVPLE>
- <https://cycladeslife.gr/%CF%80%CE%B5%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%87%CE%AD%CF%82/%CE%B3%CF%85%CE%AC%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%82/>

¹¹ **NBS** definition according to this source: <https://www.iucn.org/our-work/nature-based-solutions#:~:text=Nature%2Dbased%20Solutions%20are%20actions,simultaneously%20benefiting%20people%20and%20nature.>

10. **Energy Efficiency (Solar, wind, geothermal energy, etc.):** it is crucial to examine the island's energy efficiency through a variety of green energy technologies (including energy production from No8) to achieve (green) energy efficiency for the island, in accordance with the European Green Deal¹².
11. **The biodiversity strategies,** especially the EU biodiversity strategy for 2030¹³.
12. **Environmental preservation** surveillance initiatives, ongoing actions/projects, and other similar activities that are specifically related to the island.

The **deliverables can only be submitted in digital files** bearing the participant's digital code.

The following will **not** be accepted:

- Entries submitted after the deadline
- Entries that do not respect the conditions of anonymity
- Entries that violate the rights of creators and/or third parties
- Attachments other than those stipulated in this document.

Entries that do not meet the requirements set forth in this document or that contain any kind of irregularity shall be highlighted by the Technical Committee of the Competition and submitted to the Jury, which shall decide on whether they are to be disqualified or not. The jury will register their decision in their report.

Graphic requirements:

- Metric scale for the presentation of all drawings submitted.
- No restrictions on presentation mode. Participants are allowed to use any color, drawing techniques, or electronic models they deem appropriate.
- The use of a graphical scale is recommended to allow better visualization of the projection screen.

Participants must ensure the **readability** of the texts and drawings to facilitate their comprehension and assessment, as well as the future printing and/or presentation of their projects.

Models cannot be directly submitted, but photographs of models may be included in the submitted material.

¹² European Green Deal goals and targets. Source: https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu-action/european-green-deal_en

¹³ EU biodiversity strategy. Source: https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/biodiversity-strategy-2030_en

5. Evaluation

The evaluation of entries will be based on the extent of their response to the Competition requirements and, more specifically, to the following criteria, which are not listed in order of importance.

- General impression and clarity of the overall concept
- Compliance with the Competition objectives
- Preservation of the historical memory of the island's past
- Protection of the island's biodiversity and natural resources
- Innovation, originality, and creativity of the proposal
- Potential of creating an identity
- Relation to and integration with the surrounding area
- Quality of spaces, composition of volumes, and architectural design
- Contribution to sustainable development, environmental and social impact
- Adequacy of proposed functions and their localization
- Usability for users

The Jury may detail and expound the evaluation criteria during the evaluation process but cannot modify the criteria nor add new criteria.

6. Competition Timetable

Competition launch **Wednesday 03-07-2024**

Deadline for 1st Round of questions **Wednesday 31-07-2024** 1 month after the announcement

Deadline for answers **Monday 09-09-2024** 4+ weeks after the questions deadline

Deadline for registration **Monday 11-11-2024** www.alumil.com/arxellence3

Deadline for 2nd round of questions **Friday 22-11-2024**

Deadline for answers **Friday 6-12-2024** 2 weeks after the questions deadline

Opening of Entry Submissions **Monday 09-12-2024**

Deadline for entries **Monday 14-04-2025** 4 months after receipt of the second round of answers

Formal examination of entries by the Technical Committee **Monday 28-04-2025** 1-2 weeks, depending on the number of entries

Jury sessions, evaluation of entries, and report **12 / 16 - 05-2025** 3-5 working days after completion of the formal report of the technical committee.

Announcement of Competition results **Wednesday 21-05-2025**

Note: Following the completion of the 2nd round of Questions, the Brief of Arxellence 3 may be updated to become more analytical. This potential update seeks to address and incorporate the insights and inquiries submitted by the participants.

6.1. Post-Competition Activities

The post-Competition activities include the publication of a special edition book showcasing the submitted architectural proposals.

Definitions

Definitions of terms used in **Arxellence 3** can be found in the “**Report on the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030: Bringing nature back into our lives**” (2020/2273(INI))

You can read the Report [here](#).

7. Appendix



