

Cultural Center of Marrakech, Morocco

https://**competitions**.uni.xyz



Img 1: Banks of river Nile - An illustration

Premise

An **oasis** is a **lush green area in the middle of a desert, centred around a natural spring or a well.** It is almost a reverse island, in a sense, because it is a tiny area of water surrounded by a sea of sand or rock. **Oasis** can be fairly easy to spot—at least in deserts that do not have towering sand dunes. The sight of an oasis on the horizon has been a very welcome one for desert travellers.
They vary in size from a cluster of date palms around a well or a spring to a city and its **irrigated cropland. Dates, cotton, olives, figs, citrus fruits, wheat and corn (maize) are common oasis crops.**

Rivers that flow through some deserts provide permanent sources of water for large, elongated oasis. The fertile Nile River valley and delta in Egypt, supplied with water from the Nile River, is an example of this type of large oasis. At **22,000 square kilometres**, it might be the largest oasis in the world.



Img 2: Earthen ware of Marrakesh Region (Source: Veranda)

Culture + Oasis

Oases are areas of intensive agricultural production in a region dominated by an arid climate. Present for centuries, even millennia, they have been able to adapt to the multiple shocks (climatic, political, economic ...) that the region has experienced during its history rares en milieu hostile.

Today, they remain a symbol of sustainable management of scarce natural resources in a hostile environment.

How can a concept of Oasis and the culture of Marrakech come together in an architectural project that is much more than a culture box? How can it symbolize the Marrakesh of the future?



Img 3: Looming drought that prevails in the region - A concept

Issue

During the 20th century, the oasis regions experienced socio-economic-spatial changes and climatic crises marked by severe droughts which were reflected on the oasis ecosystems.

In fact, the oasis populations have experienced relentless population growth, natural resources have reached their limits, and the foundations of the economy are facing several challenges. The ever-increasing needs of the population, declining production resources, silting up, degradation and abandonment of agricultural land and similar actions has led us here.

How can manifestations of modern desert architecture reveal design and material can combat the challenging climatic conditions of arid environments and extreme temperatures? Like the cactus and the camel, buildings must adapt to survive?



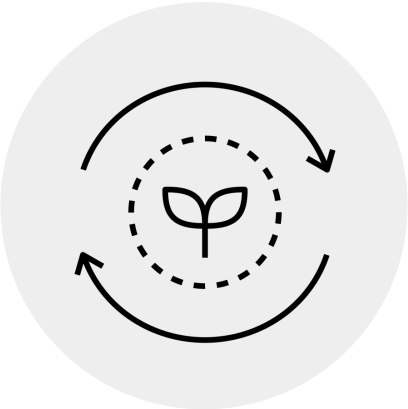
Img 4: An oasis within a desert. - An illustration

Brief

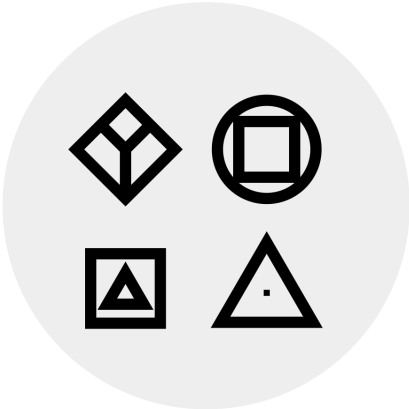
The design challenge is to create a cultural center in the remote regions of Marrakech City in Morocco, that brings access to more livelihood opportunities and tourism to its remote areas.

The cultural centre should be an example of a green cultural city – where usage of energy, alternative energy, recycling and sustainable development is implemented as an example for the rest of the region.

The oasis should take care of environmental issues and reduce waste. As the site is close to the dam, how can this tourism infrastructure demonstrate responsibility at the same time celebrate culture of the region? The oasis could be one of the first cultural centers in the world created on a sustainable basis – and without to compromise creativity, practicality, costs and uniqueness.



Reviving
Blending and reviving old construction techniques.



Materials
Using contextual materials and assemblies.



Experimentation
Experimenting the above two objectives with technologies of today.



Sustainability
Developing a sustainable and feasible model of the cultural center.

Objectives

The following objectives can be a point of beginning to conceive this design. Participants can assume their own contexts and users before initiating their design process.

1. Theater
200sqm

2. Mediatheque
(Library and AV room)
100sqm

3. Artisanal training rooms
30sqm x 3 nos.

4. Music conservatory
50sqm

5. Exhibition gallery
~100sqm

6. Utilities
(Restaurants, Cafeteria, Toilets)
100sqm

7. Administration
(Offices, Meeting Rooms)
~100sqm

8. Storage
50sqm

Programmatic Outline

The following programmatic outline is the point to begin your design at. You can add more functions and activities in relevance or modify the above design programme



Img 5: A city market in Marrakech - View

Marrakech

The culture in **Marrakech**, just like any culture worldwide, plays an important part in shaping a city and its people. Marrakech is rich in culture and so diverse with its historical influences reflected through the beautiful architecture, delicious cuisine and welcoming people. The culture in the 'red city' is unique and has been strongly influenced by Arab and Islamic civilisations because of the vast Berber population. The culture in Marrakech is portrayed through **language, religion, music, crafts, and tradition.**

Bathed in the pink glow of its adobe walls, the lovely Marrakesh throws open its doors to all culture lovers. Marrakesh is composed of an array of influences that defy eras, a mosaic of colors where the wonders of the past and the present come into focus. The site lies in the outskirts of the city next to Lalla Takerkoust dam.

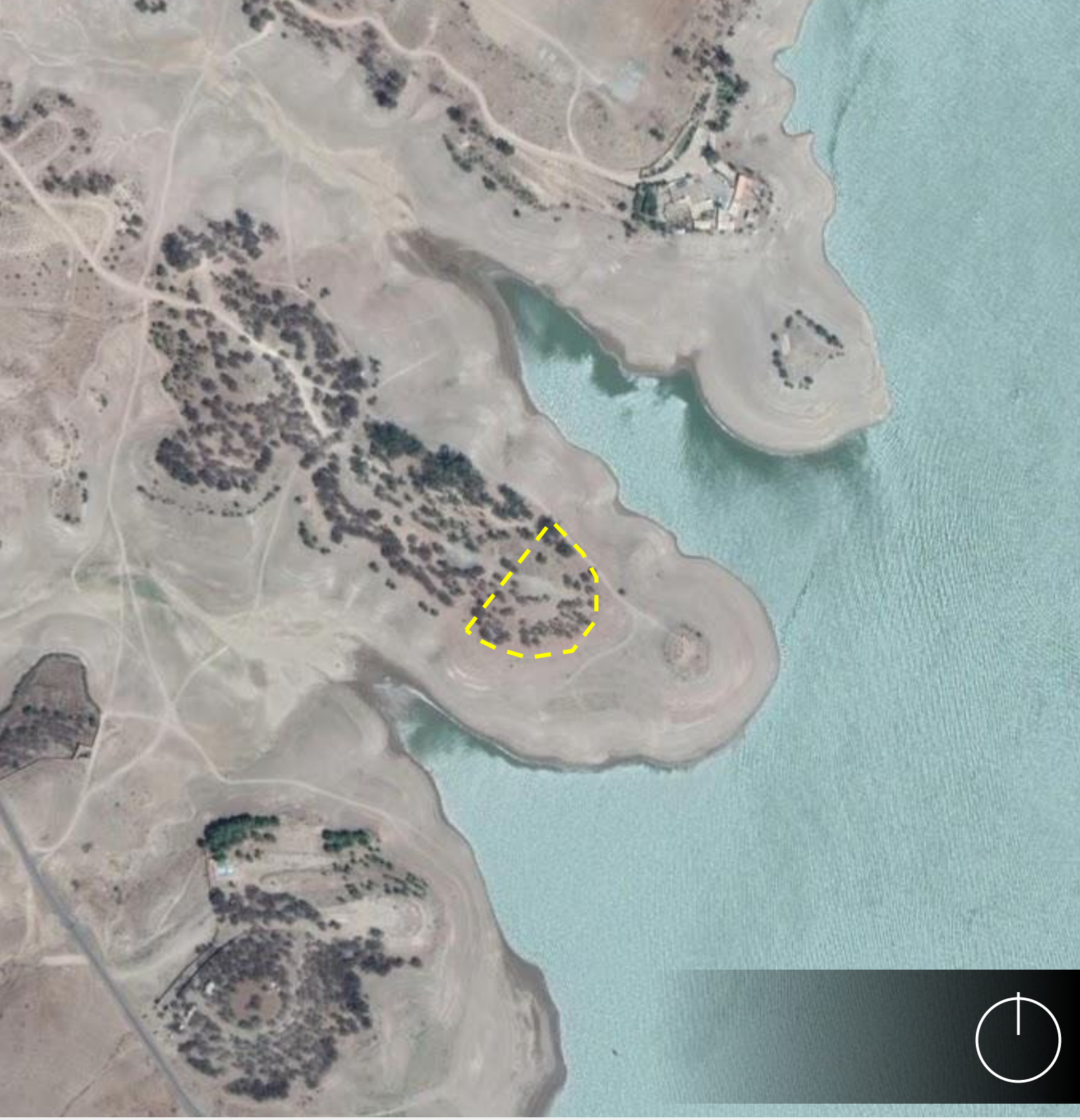


Img 6: Site plan of the competition.

Site Plan

The given site of this competition is situated in the Agafay desert of Marrakech in Morocco, and more precisely 40 kilometers from the city, at Lalla Takerkoust which provides a perfect setting to get in touch with nature. Lalla Takerkoust is a man-made lake which was built between 1929 and 1935 for the primary purpose of providing the city of Marrakech and the surrounding areas with electricity, as well as to irrigate the agricultural fields in the plain of Haouz.

Max Builtup Area: **1000**sqm. | Site Area: **~5700**sqm. | Coordinates
Height restriction 10m | Setbacks as given in CAD plan



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Guidelines

You have to deliver an architectural outcome on the following site, based on the given outlines.

• Recommended number of sheets/presentation images/boards:

5 (Five) of size **[2362px** x **3544px]** or **[400mm x 600mm** in **150 dpi]** in portrait digital format (**JPEG only**).

Minimum 3 (Three) & **No maximum sheet limit.** Each image should be less than **15MB.** (Do not submit PNG format)

Minimum requisite submissions are sheets/boards + Cover image containing:

• Site plan (Compulsory)
• Key conceptual sections x 1 (Minimum)
• 3D views x 4
• Cover image / Thumbnail of size 2000px x 1000px or larger in aspect ratio 2:1.
• Answering 6 FAQs #
• This is the link for new file sizes, here.

#The FAQ's have to be answered as instructed in the FAQ document in the 'additional resources folder'.

Deadlines

Discover the competition schedule and deadlines on the competitions page or on this link - Schedule.

Resources

This competition contains additional resources that contains a set of files useful to complete the competition submission. This folder is made available on your profile dashboard automatically as soon as you register.

This additional resources folder of this competition contains: Submission Format files in PSD | AI | InDD, FAQs, High Res maps, CAD file of the site plan.

Rules

+ The competitions is open for **students and professionals** from all the disciplines of design.

+ The team limit for this competition is **4 members maximum per team.**

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+ You can register more than one team but they have to be registered separately.

+ Ensure that the final sheets submitted **do not include your name or any other mark of identification**. Your submission is linked to your user account which stands as your identification.

+ This is a design **ideas challenge only.** There is no built commission/realization associated with the problem.

+ In case of publication in yearbook we will reach out separately for selected entries.

Pro-Tips

+ Use exploded views to discuss multi levelled conceptual models better.

+ Mention sheet number on corner of every sheet.

+ Plagiarism of any idea / form / design / image will be disqualified with a notice.

+ All the sheets or images will be viewed on a digital device. **e.g.** Laptop screen or projector. Uploaded sheets or images will not be physically printed for evaluation. The submission hence should be prepared for digital viewing only.

+ Submit JPEG images only. (PNG will not function)

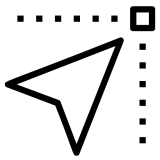
+ While submitting, name your project with an original title and not by the name of the competition. This makes your project more unique for the viewers and boosts searchability.



Awards

Grants of up to a total of **24,000$** can be won on this challenge. Learn more about the full conditions on the competition page here.

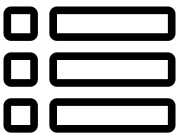
The entries will be judged by an international jury of the competition on the following criterions:



Presentation
The fundamental to a good entry is a good presentation.



Concept/Idea
Quality of thought and intent in pre-design phase.



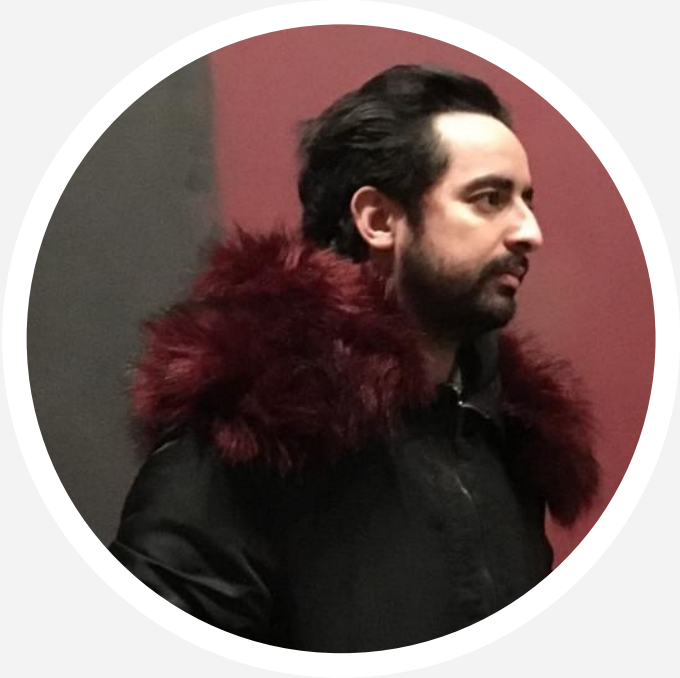
Spaces/Programme
How the spaces are calculated and ordered.



Design Outcome
The final architectural outcome of the solution.

Judging Criteria

The judging panel can also add other criterions based on their internal discussions - which will be in line with the problem statement. Participants are advised to fulfil above given criterions first in their design.



Curator | Chafik Zerrouki

Architect

Zaha Hadid Architects
https://www.zaha-hadid.com/

Chafik joined **Zaha Hadid Architects in 2016.** He has participated in several major projects in North Africa, the Middle East, China and Russia.
Chafik worked on the Grand Theatre of Rabat of more than 27,000 m2 in Morocco. He also participated in the design development of the 80,000 m2 Sberbank Technopark research campus in Moscow and Yulon City multi-tours in New Taipei City. He also worked on the 150,000 m2 Morpheus hotel and casino tower in Macau, and participated in the interior design of the 84,000 m2 Opus hotel in Dubai.
Chafik has also participated in several international competitions, including the Unicorn Island project located in China, and where the design option proposed by Chafik was selected among several other proposals. Today the project is under construction.
Previously, he worked for LafargeHolcim Algeria, first as an Architect Designer delivering the 4th largest construction research and development laboratory in the world and 1st in Africa for the group. Then as a manager of development of construction systems in Algeria.

About

unfuse™

Unfuse serves as a unit for **Uni** in the field of Architecture. It intends to break the fusion of traditional design barriers and methodologies by making it a platform for experimentation and conceptual exchange of ideas in architecture, urbanism, society, culture and ecology. It is a research initiative dedicated to providing opportunities for designers from all domains to explore ideas that go beyond the boundaries of architectural discipline and enrich our built environment; thereby opening up possibilities for promotion of architectural thought at a global level.

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