unfuse™

Circle of Life

Urban Cemetery Design Challenge

http://**competitions**.uni.xyz



Img 1: Eclipse - One world one view. - A concept.

Premise

The story of birth and demise began to weave when humans started reading the stars and celestial bodies. **Socio-cultural phenomena** and **language** paved the path for religion and beliefs. There were different interpretations and observations of the same sightings from all parts of the world, and mythological diaries were written.

As religions started shaping culture, the concept of **life and death** took different routes. Each religion had a new chronicle associated, that tapped our emotions. Both the ideologies became religious affairs that were treated with great precision. Infrastructures and spaces to perform these rituals were built, and held positions of great sanctity and significance in the society. Tombs, Pyramids, temples, all kinds of structures were constructed, and often formed the heart of a city or civilization.

As civilizations began to develop, and cultures started diluting, did all the public space re-equipped themselves to the growing changes?



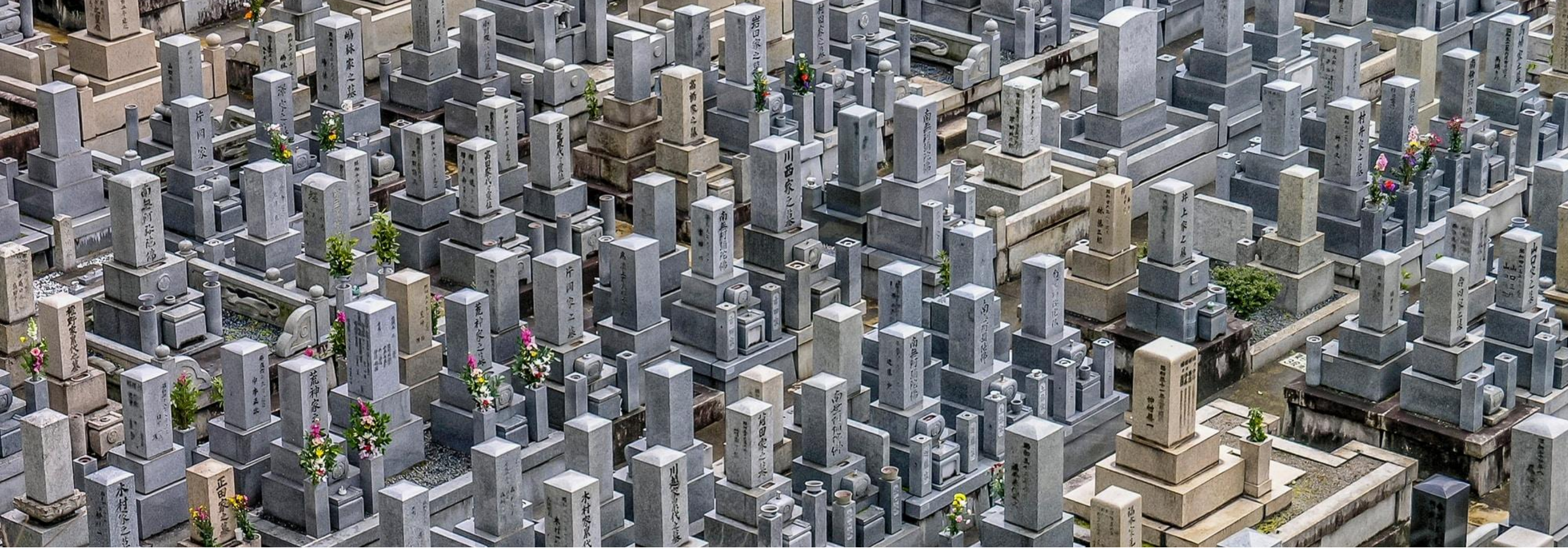
Img 2: - Faiths unified by a common element - fire. A concept

Faithless

In the age of globalization where culture is getting **homogenized**, one can imagine a society where religions are not distinct any more. Where the society has moved ahead from rituals and developed new traditions. In such an era, birth and death - constituting the **circle of life** would also be celebrated in unconventional ways and rituals would be re-written.

With most of the urban population moving to cities and adapting change, a coherently unique population is emerging. This population that has been accumulating in the urban realms, is now facing an impending shortage of land. The available land is no more affordable for the masses.

The idea of life, death, and the afterlife is currently associated with religion and faith, but what happens in the coming century when faith is not ubiquitous?



Img 3: Cemetery near Kiyomizu Temple in Kyoto, Japan.

Mortality

While **death** may not be a subject of taboo for today's evolving world, its negligence in design has brought us to a difficult spot. Our life expectancy rates might have risen, but humans have **limited time on this planet**. Last rites as a practice are universally considered holy, however, multiplied over a large population, it might become an entirely unsustainable practice in the future, if not designed well.

In the coming decades, where our aging population will complete their life cycle and we will face rising mortality rates - **we still do not have enough infrastructure to support this purpose**. The pace at which this unspoken need for the deceased is growing - will fall short for the demographic in consideration.

In times of accelerating urbanization and densification, cemeteries face the challenge of keeping up their relevance as a public urban space. This condition is not only an issue of space but also of cultural identity that can be projected within its environment.

If the way the deceased are buried is reflective of the social, cultural, political, and religious views of the living, then how do we integrate this into a common ground?





Img 4: Scarcity of land in urban centers and cemeteries within them - A concept

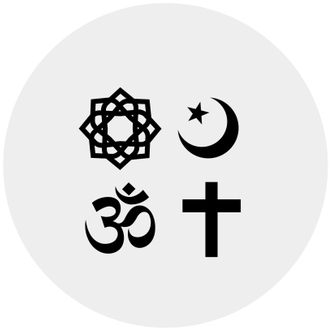
Brief

In a world where there is an **unprecedented growth in population and cultural identities are being reshaped**, there is a dire need to find a universal space to address all communities accordingly. The infrastructure of the coming decades has to be prepared for a sustainable future. With land being a limited resource now, a strategical and sensitive approach to design a resting place is necessary.

In times where horizontal growth of cities comes at a larger cost, one needs to examine other dimensions of growth. They need to be adaptable and to mutate in the urban setting, to serve a large mortal society.

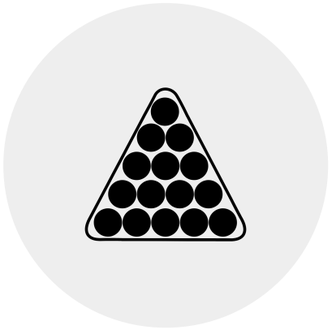
How will architecture house this uncharted need of the cities of tomorrow? How can we make a common ground for all faiths/agnostic population to practice their last rites in sustainable ways within our future urban environments?

Objectives



Inclusive

Create a cohesive environment to include all faiths



Balance

Balance the density and quality of space



Sustainable

Overall functionality of the Resting Place must be supported on a sustainable strategy



Scalable

Must be flexible enough to accommodate a growing mortal population

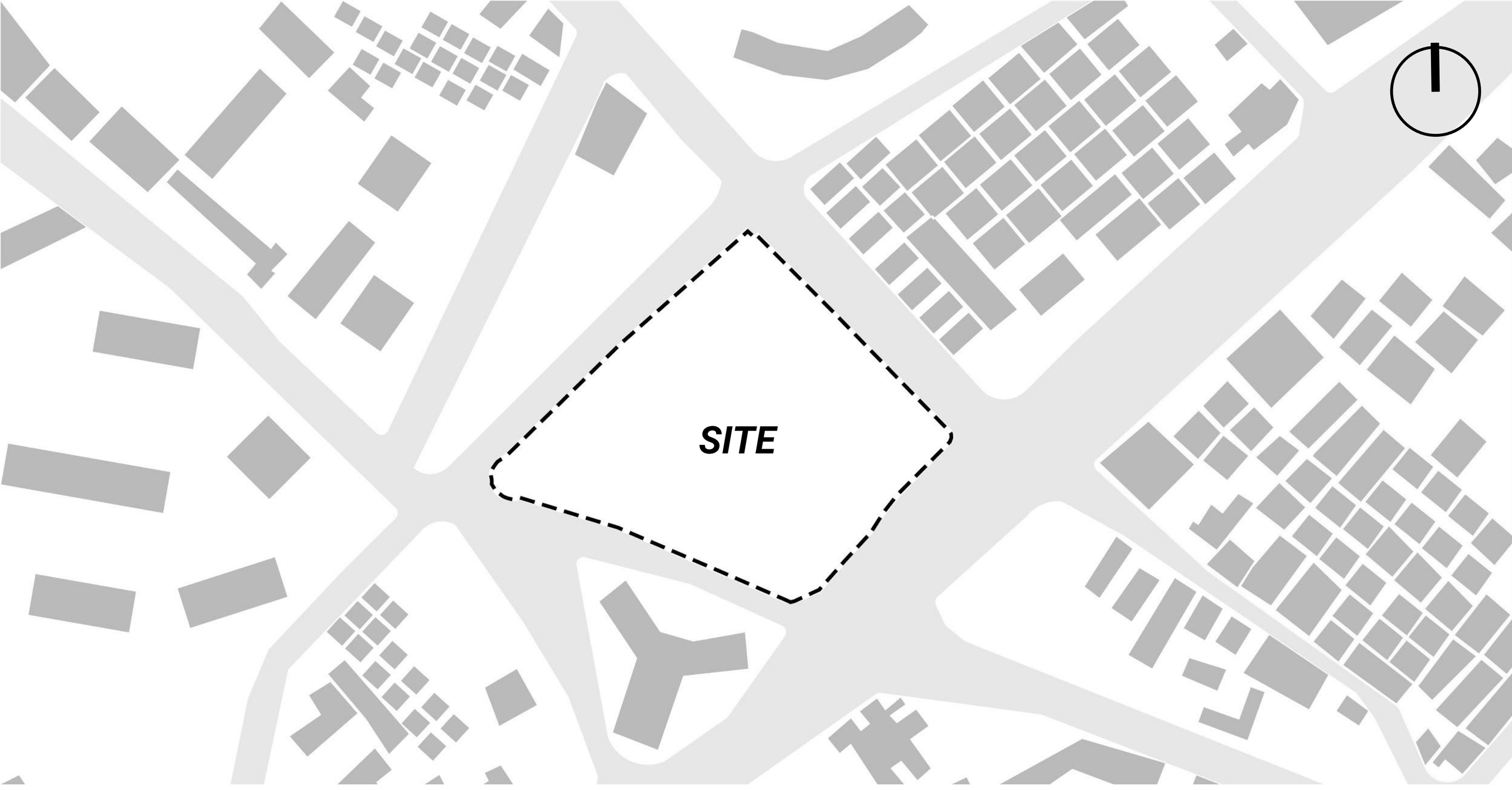
Apart from the fundamental requirement of creating a resting place for the deceased (not memorial), participants are free to propose functionality to support the primary function.

Experimentation with built manifestation to regulate the mood of spaces is something that could be explored.

Img 5: Aerial night view of Shanghai.

Shanghai, China

Shanghai has grown to become a global financial center and transport hub, with the world's busiest container port, it is one of the most populous cities in the world with a population of 26.3 million as of 2019. China is an officially atheist state, which has freedom of religion as a principle enshrined with the laws and constitution of the country. To be able to serve such a large crowd with basic amenities and public facilities the city municipality has placed most of its cemeteries **outside the dense part of the city**. This is reasonable considering the lack of space in the core city, however, it makes these places highly inaccessible at large. Cemeteries may not be something which one wants to see every day in a city, although, it is one of the only places where a person can **connect again to their departed** relatives/acquaintances/friends/loved ones. This inaccessibility; invisibly disconnects the entire city to such an understatedly crucial function.



Img 6: Site Plan

Site Plan

The challenge here hence extends to so many different factors and making cemeteries more accessible and people-friendly in today's urban context. The site chosen for the project lies within the **Hongkou** district of suburbian Shanghai is placed between a residential area and one of the busiest commercial streets of Shanghai on either side. The site is currently a parking lot. The design outcome will accommodate this public parking at the ground floor (or floors) and the function of the cemetery on top of it.

Area: 19439.67 m^2
Height limit: No Height limit
Site coordinates: 31°15'37.1"N 121°29'44.9"E
Ground Coverage : 50%

Submission

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

• A maximum of 4 boards / sheets. – **[2362px** x **3544px]** or **[400mm x 600mm** in **150 dpi]** in portrait digital format (JPEG).
• Each image should be less than **15MB**
• You can find the preset PSD, AI and INDD template files in the 'additional resources folder. and here.

This additional resources folder contains: FAQ Questions, High Res maps, and CAD file of the site plan.

Minimum requisites in the sheets are 3 sheets/boards + Cover image containing:

• Site plan (Compulsory)
• Key conceptual sections x 1 (Minimum)
• 3D views x 4
• Cover image/Thumbnail of size 2000 x 1000 px or larger in aspect ratio 2:1.
• Floor plans, images, sketches (if any) can be added to support the entry in the form of additional images.
• Answer 6 FAQ questions in the discussion section as given on the 'additional resources folder'.

+ The team limit for this competition is 4 members maximum.
+ Use exploded views to discuss multi levelled conceptual models better.
+ Ensure that the final sheets which are submitted do not include your name or any other mark of identification.
+ Mention sheet number on corner of every sheet.
+ This is a design ideas challenge only. There is no built commission/realization is associated with the problem
+ Plagiarism of any idea / form / design / image will be disqualified with a notice.

Registration page here: http://competitions.uni.xyz

Submission Deadline: December 25, 2019
Submission closes this day.

Public Voting Starts: January 14, 2020
Voting starts on this date.

Public Voting ends: February 8, 2020
Voting ends on this date.

Result Announcement: February 20, 2020
Result day!

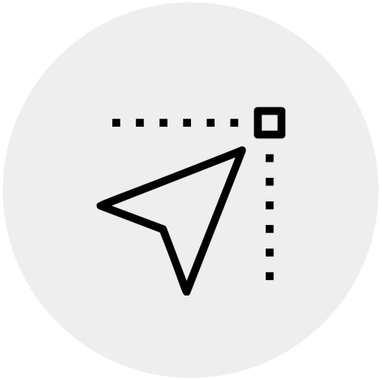
Rewards



Grants of up to a total of **20,000$** can be won on this challenge. Learn more about the full conditions on the competition page here.

Judging Criteria

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.



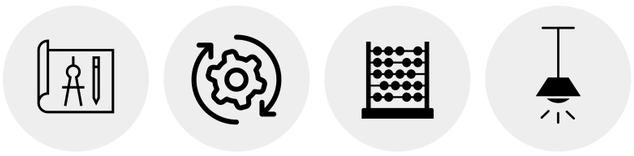
Spaces/Programme

How the spaces are calculated and ordered.



Design Output

The final architectural outcome of the solution.



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

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Unfuse serves as a unit block 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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unfuse

Circle of Life

Reinterpreting **urban cemeteries** in **context of future**.

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