



# Cultúr Éireann Culture Ireland



OPEN CALL FOR  
EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST IN CURATION  
OF IRELAND'S REPRESENTATION AT  
THE 18<sup>th</sup> INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE  
EXHIBITION AT VENICE,  
LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA 2023

## CONTENTS

<i>Invitation</i>	1
<i>Background</i>	2
<i>Details of Open Call</i>	4
<i>Culture Ireland Support</i>	6
<i>Budget</i>	7
<i>Exhibition Brief</i>	9
<i>Submission &amp; Selection</i>	11
<i>Terms &amp; Conditions</i>	13
<i>Feedback</i>	14
<i>Selection Timeline</i>	15
<i>Contact</i>	15

## INVITATION

Culture Ireland and the Arts Council/ An Chomhairle Ealaíon are inviting expressions of interest to curate Ireland's representation at the *18<sup>th</sup> International Architecture Exhibition at Venice, La Biennale di Venezia* in 2023.

Compelling, ambitious and imaginative proposals are sought for consideration from Irish architects, architecture practices, curators or teams with expertise in architecture.

Please engage with this opportunity, if you are interested in:

- presenting Irish architecture and architecture practice to an international audience;
- using this global platform to stimulate discussion on architecture in and from Ireland;
- gaining international profile and creating future global opportunities for Irish architects;
- touring the exhibition nationally in 2024.

Through Ireland's participation in the *18<sup>th</sup> International Architecture Exhibition at Venice, La Biennale di Venezia*, we seek to reflect the statement of Shelley McNamara and Yvonne Farrell of Grafton Architects, curators of the 2018 Biennale to:

*“celebrate the shared culture of architecture, demonstrating how inventive, comforting, exhilarating, modest, heroic architecture can be”.*

You are invited to submit a proposal by **noon, 1 March 2022**

## **BACKGROUND**

The *International Architecture Exhibition at Venice, La Biennale di Venezia*, is the world's leading architecture event. Along with the International Curated Exhibition, and collateral events, it features more than 60 national exhibitions from around the world. In 2018, the total number of visitors to the exhibition exceeded 275,000 and in 2021, having been postponed from 2020, the Venice Architecture Biennale attracted over 300,000 visitors, despite global challenges.

*Ireland at Venice* is Ireland's national representation at the Venice Biennale which is led by Culture Ireland in partnership with the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon. Culture Ireland and the Arts Council are committed to building on Ireland's growing reputation at previous Architecture Biennales.

Through Ireland's participation in the *International Architecture Exhibition at Venice, La Biennale di Venezia* Culture Ireland and the Arts Council aim to raise the profile of Irish architecture and create opportunities for Irish architects internationally.

As well as serving as a global platform for Irish architecture, the Venice Biennale offers architects the opportunity to engage with a diverse international audience, stimulate discussion, and influence future trends in architecture. It also offers the participants a unique opportunity to engage and connect with international architects, curators and collaborators.

### **2023 Theme**

On 14 December 2021 the Board of La Biennale di Venezia appointed Lesley Lokko with the specific task of curating the exhibition in 2023. However, at the time of publishing this invitation, the overall curatorial theme has not yet been announced.

It is the preference that the national representation of Ireland respond to the overall curatorial theme, when available. Should the theme be made public by the closing date it will be found on La Biennale di Venezia website (<http://www.labiennale.org/en/architecture/>).

### **Ireland's Pavilion**

Ireland has a provisional reservation on space in the Arsenale for 2023 (in the same location as Ireland's national exhibitions in 2021, 2019, 2018 and 2017). Images and maps are available in the Appendix.

The 18<sup>th</sup> *International Architecture Exhibition at Venice, La Biennale di Venezia* will be held from 20 May to 26 November 2023 and Ireland's Pavilion must be open throughout the full exhibition period.

### **Irish Tour**

It is a requirement that the exhibit is returned to Ireland for a national tour in 2024 for the benefit of Irish audiences. Consideration should be given to this tour in the development of proposals.

## DETAILS OF OPEN CALL

Culture Ireland and the Arts Council are seeking expressions of interest from those who wish to curate and present an exhibition to represent Ireland at the *18<sup>th</sup> International Architecture Exhibition at Venice, La Biennale di Venezia 2023*.

The applicant may be

- an architect, architectural practice or curator with expertise in architecture or
- a team, which may comprise architects, curators, makers and other practitioners.

In the case of all group applications the application must name the curator as lead applicant who will then be the main contact throughout the project.

Those making a submission must demonstrate the appropriate level of knowledge and skill to develop, manage and deliver an exhibition of the scale to represent Ireland in Venice in 2023.

For the *18<sup>th</sup> International Architecture Exhibition at Venice, La Biennale di Venezia 2023* proposals are sought on the following basis:

- The focus of the proposal must be a topic or subject area which is explicitly relevant to contemporary aspects of architecture in Ireland, such as its culture, theories, practices, practitioners, histories, future directions. Such focus should relate to the international context and forum for architecture that is part of the Venice Biennale;
- The proposal may involve presenting one architect or architectural practice or presenting the work of a number of Irish architects. In such cases the architect or architects to be exhibited must be listed and their engagement confirmed at the time of making the proposal;
- The proposal should be ambitious and reflect the scale of the opportunity, and the fact that the exhibition will be representing Ireland on this world stage;

- The curator to lead the delivery of the exhibition must be identified in the proposal. The curator must be Irish or working on the island of Ireland;
- The appointed curator or curator-led team will be responsible for concept, design, delivery and management of the exhibition in Venice in 2023 and the subsequent national tour in Ireland during 2024;
- Consideration should be given to sustainability in all stages in the life-cycle of the project.

## **CULTURE IRELAND SUPPORT**

Culture Ireland is the named Commissioner for the Venice Biennale. Culture Ireland will work with the successful applicant and support the project in relation to communications, launch and opening events. A guide to exhibiting at the Venice Biennale, which is being developed on the basis of the experience of previous representations, will be made available to assist in delivery of the selected project for 2023.



## **BUDGET**

A core budget has not yet been finalised for the 2023 Biennale, although a baseline operating budget of approx. €350,000 may be used as a guideline, comprising €250,000 from Culture Ireland and €100,000 from the Arts Council.

The space provisionally reserved by Ireland in the Arsenale for 2023 has a venue rental estimated to be €140,000. This rental cost is included in the overall budget of c. €350,000 and paid directly by Culture Ireland to La Biennale. Therefore, the estimated net operating budget is €210,000. It has been the experience of previous representations at Venice that some fundraising was required to supplement the budget to meet the scale of their ambition for the projects.

A separate budget of up to €100K will be made available by the Arts Council for the national tour in 2024. This will require a separate application to the Arts Council in late 2023

Within the operating budget, the successful team must cover:

- The design, development and production of their concept;
- The delivery of all appropriate exhibition graphics, images, equipment and materials as needed to communicate and mediate the exhibition to a public audience, internationally and nationally;
- All shipping, installation and de-installation and return costs of the exhibition;
- All travel and accommodation in Venice for the curatorial team, installation team, participating team and invigilators.
- Costs associated with the promotion of the exhibition.

The successful team will be required to set up a financial management and reporting structure and agree this with Culture Ireland and the Arts Council.

Further details regarding budgetary requirements will be outlined to the successful team on appointment.

## **EXHIBITION BRIEF**

### **Criteria**

Applications will be assessed and selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- The clarity and relevance of proposed concept and design to contemporary Irish architectural practice and development of architecture culture, ideas, challenges and practices in Ireland;
- The ambition, innovation, quality and appropriateness of the proposal to represent Ireland to an international audience in the context of the platform of the Venice Biennale;
- Experience, expertise and success in mediating, communicating and delivering exhibitions of architecture to diverse audiences;
- Experience in project management of significant projects and evidence of producing and delivering projects internationally;
- Experience in budget management;
- Fundraising capacity;
- Organisational capacity and resources;
- Availability to meet time and travel commitments;
- Reporting and editorial skills for documentation and dissemination;
- Networking skills and international connections;
- Ambition and capacity to deliver the national tour in 2024.
- The relevance and compatibility of the proposal to the overall theme of the Biennale, if available;

## **Experience**

It is desirable that the applicant has experience of:

- Developing, curating and mediating large-scale exhibitions / projects;
- Communicating architecture to the public through exhibitions;
- Working with a range of international contacts and networks, relevant to the arts and cultural sectors;
- Generating and managing private and public funding;
- Experience of working with the media and stakeholders in the promotion of the arts and/or cultural projects.

## **SUBMISSION**

### **STAGE I**

#### **Submission**

Proposals outlining applicant's ideas, approach and capacity to deliver a presentation of the scale to represent Ireland at the 18th *International Architecture Exhibition at Venice, La Biennale di Venezia* in 2023 should:

- Include a working title
- In case of a team, identify the full team and their individual roles including that of the lead applicant who will take on the role of the curator of the project
- Confirmation of agreement from an architect or architects in cases where their work is to be exhibited
- Explicitly address all criteria outlined above
- Include an outline plan for the national tour of the exhibition in Ireland in 2024
- Include project management budget indicating proposed fee structure
- Not exceed **5 x A4 pages in PDF format**
- Be accompanied by all relevant biographies

**All applications must be submitted by email to [info@cultureireland.gov.ie](mailto:info@cultureireland.gov.ie) by noon, 1 March 2022.**

All proposals will be evaluated based on outlined criteria by a panel which will comprise:

- An independent Chair
- Representative of Culture Ireland
- Representative of the Arts Council
- Two international jury members

As soon as the jury members have been confirmed, their names will be made public by Culture Ireland and Arts Council through websites/social media.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to Stage II of the selection process.

## **STAGE II**

### **Interview**

Stage II will comprise interview by the panel involved in the shortlisting phase (any change in panellists will be advised to shortlisted candidates in advance of interview).

The exact date of the interview has not been set yet, however, it is envisaged that it will take place in April 2022.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

- This call for submissions is open to architects, architecture practices, curators or teams with an expertise in architecture. Applicant should be from or based in Ireland.
- Submissions will not be returned.
- No fees or expenses will be paid for participation in either stage of the selection process.
- The receipt of each proposal will be acknowledged by email.
- All applicants will be informed in writing of the outcome of their application following each stage of the process they participated in.
- Culture Ireland and the Arts Council reserve the right appoint an individual or team to curate Ireland's national representation at Venice if the open submission process does not lead to a successful outcome.
- The decision made by the selection panel is final.

## **FEEDBACK**

Written feedback will be provided to all shortlisted applicants based on the evaluation criteria outlined.

*Ireland at Venice is an initiative of Culture Ireland in partnership with the Arts Council/ An Chomhairle Ealaíon*



## SELECTION TIMELINE

*Submissions must be received by **noon, 1 March 2022***

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*All proposals will be acknowledged by Culture Ireland by 4 March 2022*

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*Successful short-listed applicants will be notified in early April 2022. Shortlisted applicants will be provided with details of Stage II submission requirements at that time.*

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*Stage II applicants will be required to present at interview at a date in May 2022 (to be confirmed at a later stage).*

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*Announcement of successful proposal will follow completion of Stage II of the selection process.*

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## CONTACT

Any enquiries regarding submissions should be sent by e-mail to:  
[info@cultureireland.gov.ie](mailto:info@cultureireland.gov.ie)