



Media Advisory

August 2025

## **UNU-FLORES launches international ideas competition for the House of No Waste in September**

Calling the next generation to reimagine the built environment for a pollution-free planet

Initiated by the United Nations University Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources (UNU-FLORES), the **House of No Waste competition (HØW)** calls upon aspiring young architects, engineers, planners, scientists, and designers to engage in a global competition. **The vision for the HØW Competition is to develop proposals for groundbreaking public projects that not only embody circular economy principles and human-centred design, but to also set a new standard for how we manage resources and avoid wasting resources in construction.** Submissions can take the form of a building concept, an urban planning strategy, a building or material system, a construction technology or process, or a product relating to the built environment. Participants have the freedom to define a site, context, or target user group for their submission.

The deadline for timely submission of all entries to the competition is Monday, 1 December 2025, 14:00 CET. Project authors must be young professionals or students with a maximum age of 40 years at the opening of the competition (date of birth must be later than 31 August 1984). Participation of professionals in mixed, transdisciplinary teams is encouraged. **Prize-winning projects of the HØW competition will receive UNU recognition and public promotion,** as well as monetary prizes. **The total net amount of at least 30,000 euros** is allocated for prizes and acknowledgements, split between three main prizes and three acknowledgements. Participation in the competition is free of charge.

**The official launch of the competition is on 1 September 2025. Until then, future participants can already register for the competition online at:**

[houseofnowaste.org](https://houseofnowaste.org)

The **jury** is an independent consultant to UNU-FLORES and is composed of the persons listed below, each representing a continent around the world:

**Tatiana Bilbao**

Architect, Mexico City, Mexico

**Barbara Buser**

Architect, Basel, Switzerland

**Momoyo Kaijima**

Architect, Tokyo, Japan

**Mark Lee**

Architect, New York, USA

**Zegeye Cherenet Mamo**

Architect, Addis Abeba, Ethiopia

**Jane Wernick**

Engineer, London, Great Britain

The **advisory board** provides advice in the preparation of the competition documents, the preliminary examination of submissions, and during the jury deliberations, without a vote, and consists of:

**Prof. Marc Angélil**

Architect, ETH Zurich, Los Angeles/Zürich

**Prof. Manfred Curbach**

Engineer, TU Dresden, Dresden

**Prof. Edeltraud Guenther**

Director of UNU-FLORES, Dresden

**Prof. Dirk Hebel**

Architect, KIT Karlsruhe, Karlsruhe

**Dr. Yazid Ninsalam**

Landscape Architect, RMIT University, Melbourne

UNU-FLORES, established in Dresden, Germany, in 2012, is one of thirteen institutes and programmes, located in 12 different countries, which together comprise the United Nations University. UNU-FLORES operates at the intersection of science, policy, and education to address complex sustainability challenges through a holistic understanding of resource interconnections. In 2025, as the United Nations University celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, UNU-FLORES is marking the occasion with the launch of the HØW competition. The project is guided by the principles of the European Union's 9Rs for a circular economy: Refuse, Rethink, Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Refurbish, Remanufacture, Repurpose, and Recycle, in line with the United Nations' ambition for a pollution-free planet.

All relevant dates of the competition procedure:

- Competition launch ..... Monday, 1 September 2025
- Online Webinar 1 ..... Monday, 8 September 2025, 10:00 a.m. CEST
- Online Webinar 2 ..... Monday, 22 September 2025, 10:00 a.m. CEST
- Competition deadline..... Monday, 1 December 2025, 2:00 p.m. CET
- Jury meeting..... TBA January/February 2026
- Online Exhibition (envisaged date) ..... 2026

**For more information and to register for participation:** [houseofnowaste.org](https://houseofnowaste.org)

**Contacts:**

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Benedikt Crone, Project Manager ([press@houseofnowaste.org](mailto:press@houseofnowaste.org))

Statements by the jurors:

"This initiative is crucial for rethinking how we build and live, placing care, circularity, and environmental responsibility at the centre of architectural practice."

**Tatiana Bilbao, Architect, Mexico City, Mexico**

"House of No Waste – this reminds me of the house and mentality of my grandparents: Nothing was ever thrown away, since there might be a use for everything in the future! It is now up to the young generation to reinvent and go beyond what we have forgotten over the last 80 years to secure a prosperous future for mankind on this planet!"

**Barbara Buser, Architect, Basel, Switzerland**

Statements by the advisors:

“This is more than a competition – it’s an urgent call to redefine construction as a force for planetary repair, transforming waste into opportunity and shaping spaces that give back more than they take.”

**Dr Yazid Ninsalam, Landscape Architect, Melbourne, Australia**

“Redux – one of those rare adjectives used postpositively after a noun to qualify it – means ‘bringing back’. For architecture, redux refers to getting beneficial returns from the flows channelled throughout a building and its environment.”

**Prof. Marc Angélil, Architect, Professor at Harvard University and Prof. Emeritus from ETH Zürich, Los Angeles USA / Zürich, Switzerland**

“The House of No Waste challenges us to rethink what we discard – and what we take for granted. It’s time to stop wasting not only materials, but also potential, and wasting the chance to build a truly sustainable future. When we recognise how water, energy, space, and materials – among others – are interconnected, we can design buildings – and societies – that regenerate rather than deplete.”

**Prof. Edeltraud Guenther, Director of UNU-FLORES, Dresden, Germany**

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