

ARA ASU NTO

2049

INTERNATIONAL HOUSING DESIGN
COMPETITION FOR STUDENTS
9.5.-31.11.2012



JURY REPORT



In cooperation with:



ARA-HOME 2049

INTERNATIONAL HOUSING DESIGN COMPETITION FOR STUDENTS

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0. General

0.1. Purpose of the competition

The year 2049 will mark the 100th anniversary of government-subsidised social housing production and of the Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland (ARA) and its predecessors. ARA is responsible for the funding of social housing production in Finland and at the same time for the implementation of the government’s housing policy. The importance of this agency and its impact on the housing stock in Finland is demonstrated by the fact that the year 2012 saw the completion of the millionth ARA-financed home.

Since 2008, the purview of ARA has also included national housing development and innovation reaching far into the future. In keeping with this duty, ARA decided to organise a design competition for architecture students to gain insights into what Finland and Finnish social rented housing might look in the centenary year, 2049. This served the additional purpose of making potential future designers of ARA buildings better aware of ARA.

The design competition was held in autumn 2012. Students were asked to envision what it will be like in 2049 and what kind of changes Finnish society may have undergone by then. They were then asked to design a project showing what social rented housing might look like at that date. The area selected for the competition was the Sopenkorpi district in the city of Lahti. Entrants were free to choose any city block in the district as the basis for their design.

I. Competition arrangements

I.1. Organiser of the competition

The competition was organised by the Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland (ARA) together with the City of Lahti, the Lahti Science and Business Park, and the departments of architecture at the Tampere University of Technology, Aalto University and the University of Oulu.

I.2. Timetable

Competition launched on 9 May 2012
Deadline for submitting competition questions was 14 September 2012
Responses to the questions were published on 14 September 2012
Competition deadline was 31 November 2012.
The results of the competition will be published and the prizes given out on ARA day on 15 January 2013.

I.3. Jury

The jury members are:		
Sampo Vallius	Development architect	ARA
Helena Berg	Head of communications	ARA
Markku Hedman	Professor	Tampere University of Technology
Hannu Huttunen	Professor	Aalto University
Jouni Koiso-Kanttila	Professor	University of Oulu
Markus Lehmuskoski	Town planning architect	City of Lahti
Vesa Ijäs	Head of Development	Lahti Science and Business Park

The jury was chaired by Sampo Vallius.

2. Competition brief

2.1. Nature and purpose of the competition

The competition was an international design competition intended for students. The competition was a concept competition where entrants were invited to submit not only individual design ideas but also overall concepts for housing of the future at the city block level. The purpose was to find innovative and unexplored housing solutions.

The competition brief was to outline what social rented housing might look like in 2049 and to design an ARA-financed residential building or group of buildings in the Sopenkorpi district in Lahti. What was important in this brief was to identify with the situation on the ground and to create a bold vision for the future. The aim was for entrants to consider the problem field of housing in the future and to identify themes to explore in more detail in their design.

2.2. Right to participate

The competition was open to all registered students of university-level institutions. Entries were submitted by individuals or teams. Entrants were encouraged to form multi-disciplinary teams, although each team had to include at least one student of architecture. It was acceptable for competition entries to be supervised in teaching contexts at the student’s or students’ place of study.

2.3. Competition area

The competition area was the Sopenkorpi district in the city of Lahti. Entrants were free to choose a site within this area where to locate their design. Existing buildings could be designated for demolition at the entrants’ discretion.

The Sopenkorpi district is an industrial estate near the city centre of Lahti, the green areas of Salpausselkä and existing transport connections. The area is delimited by the railway to the south and southeast, by highway 12 to the north and by a low-rise housing district to the west.

To the northeast there is a small lake named Mytjärvi, the area around which is popular for recreation.

The Sopenkorpi district is highly varied in its functions and its built environment. The buildings are of different ages and different sizes, and there are several red-brick industrial buildings in the district. The streets are straight and wide. The district includes industry, storage, office space, commercial space and even some housing. The overall area is 35 ha (hectares). At the moment, there are 43 properties in the district, about a dozen of which are owned by the City of Lahti and the rest by companies and private individuals. A soil contamination study in the Sopenkorpi district revealed that there is no contaminated soil that would restrict design.

3. Competition entries received

A total of 148 competition entries were received by the deadline, of which all but two were acceptable.

4. Judgement of the competition

4.1. General

In the design competition, students were asked to envision what it will be like in 2049 and what kind of changes Finnish society may have undergone by then. They were then asked to design a project showing what social rented housing might look like at that date; this in particular called for special envisioning skills. The huge interest shown by students in the competition concept was a positive surprise to all of the organisers, and sifting out the winner from the large number of entries received proved to be a highly challenging but at the same time utterly fascinating task.

The entries received were as diverse in their approach as they were numerous. Rather surprisingly, the entries grouped themselves into clear-cut categories according to the building typologies selected as starting points for the competition, and the jury aimed to highlight a range of entries that would be as diverse as possible. Certain entrants had chosen a comprehensive and systemic approach, calling for the entire Sopenkorpi district to be developed according to a single system. This led to a number of designs rather utopian in scope considering the normal scale of things in Finland in general and in Lahti in particular. Other entrants took a very human approach to rented housing, creating small-scale milieus. Realism often trumped innovation, and the jury would have liked to have seen bolder departures from the norm.

Sopenkorpi is a highly diverse city district with buildings of different ages, some of which no doubt would be worth preserving. The competition brief set no parameters for entrants as far as keeping or getting rid of existing buildings was concerned, but in practice those entries that took into account and preserved old buildings proved to be the most credible. In the best entries, the existing buildings were seamlessly incorporated into a new structure, thereby creating an interesting and varied cityscape with historical layers.

The entrants also found themselves addressing challenges caused by the ageing of the population and by multiculturalism. Most entrants had embraced these as an opportunity, basing their housing concepts on obstacle-free access, communality and heterogeneous housing. Some entries brought a truly fresh new breeze to the field of Finnish housing construction.

Several entrants had been inspired by technological advancements, including the integration of energy production in the residential buildings themselves. In most of the entries, the energy economy was allowed to dictate the appearance and orientation of the buildings, and some entries boldly proposed quite new techniques and materials. What was interesting was that very many entries focused on the integration of food production with housing, featuring parts of courtyards dedicated to horticulture and greenhouses on the roofs of buildings and on balconies.

The entries that were judged to be the best provided an answer to practically all of the questions presented in the competition brief. Their design involved first coming up with a clear overall concept on which the actual physical design was based. In the best cases, the overall concept provided a backbone for the entire project and logically motivated all of the solutions presented. The jury particularly appreciated those entries that solved the issues presented on the scale of the Sopenkorpi district but in such a way as to indicate the possibility of scaling up as required.

4.2. Judging criteria

The principal criterion for judging in the competition was how the entrants identify with the challenges of the future and how boldly they envision future developments. Entrants were encouraged to let their fancy fly and not to be too bound up with matter-of-fact realism. A successful entry clearly outlined the themes explored and offered innovative and daring solutions.

Judging also focused on ecological sustainability, reasonability of price, obstacle-free access, choice of location and fitting the building(s) into that location, and the quality of the environment and of the housing.



4.3. Division into classes

Upper class

IIII
AMAZING REALM APARTMENTS
APPLE FACTORY
ARCHITECTURE VILLAGE
HOME TREES
HOMER
IN BETWEEN
ISHARE
KOTIMUURI
KUJAWIANKA
LIVING GROUNDS
NEST
OFF THE GRID
OUR NEIGHBORHOOD
PLANT
TAKE AWAY
UNITY
URBAN PLEXUS
VENUE
VERTICAL ROWHOUSING
VILLAGE PEOPLE
YATZY

Middle class

239201
A.BANHART
A HOME STARTED
A PIECE OF HOUSE
AKZCEUAP
AURORA
BERGHAIN
BLOCK WALK
BLOCKS
BOOKCASE BUILDING
BORGEN
BRICKS
BUBBLE VIEW
CHICARGO
CIRCLE OF LIFE
COMMON LAND
DEVELOPING ENCOUNTERS

EMPTY CANVAS
FIREPLACE PROJECT
FOREST FACTORY
GARDEN CITY 49
GARDENING ANTS
GROW LALA
HELLO NEIGHBOR
HEXALOGIC
HUMANATURE
HUMANITY
ILMAPALLOMERI
ILO
JOKER SPACE
JUNO 6
KAUAS
KOROMOGAE
L&D
LESS IS MORE
LIVING THE TRESHOLD
LOURDES
MAJAKKA
MAKKARA
MANUS IN MANU
MEMORY LANE
MOI
MOTTAINAI
MUBO
MY DREAM FOR 2049
NAPPISILMÄT
NATURE IS ETERNAL
OASIS
ON THE MOVE
OPEN ARMS
PHOENIX
PIECES
PLAY + HOUSE
PLUG IN
POLKU
POP UP FROM THE SHOP
POWER FROM CO-HOUSING
RAG RUG
RAW RENTAL
RE-INHABITAT CO-MMUNITY
RECO
RETHINK HOME
ROOFTOP PRINCE
ROOFTOP VILLAGE
SALPAUSSELKÄ TOWER
SHIRPY

SLIDE&PLUG
SLOPED MESH
SMALLHOLDING
SOPENKORPI CROSSING
SPACE PUZZLE
S-TEAM
SUNFLOWER HOUSE
SUPERSOLU
SYMBIOSIS
T&L
TAKETE&MALUMMA
TATAMI
THE GREENHOUSE
THE NETWORK
TRANSPARENT NEST
VIUHKA
WORM
YDIN

Lower class

360
AFOOT
ALLEYWAY
BELLA
BENDED BANDS
BICYCLE COMMUNITY
BUBBLES
CCGE
CUBE
CUBENSIS
DAVID GILMOUR
DISC OF SUN
GREEN COMMUNITY
ENEELE
FORUM 2.0
HOME AND PARK
HOUSE 049
IHMISEN PESÄ
INVISIBLE EDGES
LIA TEAM
LIVING SQUARE
METEORA(FKD27)
NEIGHBORTREE
NEW NOMADS
ONIRO
PALIKKA

PCH :)
RR ARCHITECTS
SIVURAITTEILLA
ROOTS&SPROUTS
SHARING WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY
SNOWFLAKES TEAM
SOCIAL CITY
TEAM YS
THE POETRY OF POSSIBILITIES
THREE SETS OF FOUR
TREE HOUSE
URBAN FOREST
V83A5D
WELL,WELL,WELL...

Disqualified

INSIDE OUT
RAINBOW BEAR

5. RESULTS OF THE COMPETITION

5.1. Prizes and honourable mentions

First prize EUR 5,000

'Homer'

Mikki Ristola, Aalto University

Second prize EUR 3,000

'Our Neighborhood'

Joakim Breitenstein, Aalto University

Third prize EUR 2,000

'Architectural Village'

Kentaro Mabe, Tampere University of Technology

Purchase EUR 500

'In between'

Minna Ahtiainen, Aalto University

Purchase EUR 500

'Village People'

Otto Autio, Jukka Kangasniemi, Kaisa Karvinen, Kristian Kere, Riikka Leinonen, Aalto University and Santeri Räisänen, University of Helsinki

City of Lahti purchase EUR 500

'Kujawianka'

Aleksandra Zarek, Tampere University of Technology

Lahti Science and Business Park purchase EUR 500

'IIIII'

Kuisma Rasilainen, Aalto University

Honourable mentions:

'IIIII'

Kuisma Rasilainen, Aalto University

'Apple Factory'

Pasi Mänttari, Tampere University of Technology

'Off the Grid'


Hung Pin Chen and Yi Nuo Wang, National Taiwan University of Science and Technology, and Yan Aung, Cal Poly Pomona

'Urban Plexus'

Michael Tuzzo and John Wightman, University at Buffalo School of Architecture

5.2. Signing of the jury report

The jury report is signed by the chairman of the jury on behalf of the jury.



Sampo Vallius
chairman



6. Entry evaluations

1. 'Homer'

The winning entry is a diverse, comprehensive and highly logically motivated dissertation on housing in the future. The entry features a conceptual and modular building type that blends community with ecology and a flexibility that makes for a vibrant cityscape.

Old buildings are comfortably accommodated in the whole, and variable urban spaces on a human scale are created between old and new. The entry also features the best example of how to take the structure and nature of the competition area in the Sopenkorpi district into account, and this is what distinguishes it from the second prize winner. The basic structure of the building concept is rational, and its variations allow for a wide range of practical layouts for residents' needs. Mixing functions and bringing common spaces into residential buildings creates an environment where it is easy to imagine that people would enjoy comfort and wellbeing.

2.
'Our Neighborhood'



This entry is somewhat akin to the winning entry, and it also ticks all the boxes given in the competition brief with distinction, even if only one building type is used. The entry is diverse, innovative, sensitive and harmonious, and the environment it creates is comfortable and human. The design is well motivated, focusing on ecology and energy issues. The presentation is refreshing, and the narrative set in the future is insightful. That the entrant has thoroughly addressed the competition brief is evident in the attention to detail, down to home layouts, and the work is convincing and professional. The entry smoothly combines building design, urban landscape and a vision of the future.

3.
'Architectural Village'



The entry is a brilliant vision of how to reuse the old building stock and use it as a platform for community housing. The entry is original and its presentation is of a high quality. It vividly shows how an old industrial building can be converted into an intimate and vibrant village that harks back to the early days of urban construction. Under a wide glass roof there is an eco-village, a living organism that adapts to its users. The entry also presents a convincing technical description of how this complex would operate.

Purchase
'In Between'



The entry addresses the challenges of the future with means available today, which decreases its innovative content but on the other hand makes it highly credible. In terms of home design and architecture, this was one of the highest-quality entries in the competition.

Purchase
'Village People'



The entry is a fine example of the new city block concept that appeared in many entries in the competition; the principle in this concept is to use small-scale cube-shaped buildings to create a living urban space and to enter into dialogue with the old building stock. The entry is pleasant in its scaling, and the home design is competently executed.

City of Lahti purchase
'Kujawianka'



The entry creates an appealing housing environment through communality, warm materials, a freeform undulating space between buildings and greenhouse balconies projecting from the elevations. With minor alterations, the design is an executable concept not only for Sopenkorpi but for other districts in the city of Lahti, being a template for a densely built area on a human scale.

Lahti Science and Business Park purchase / Honourable mention
'IIII'



This entry is in a class of its own as regards presentation, and its sculpture-like buildings conjure up a fascinatingly ethereal and purebred world, even if its realism suffers a bit from its artistic approach. The entry is an interesting vision of the future that is well adapted to the existing structure and enters into an interesting dialogue with it.

Honourable mentions

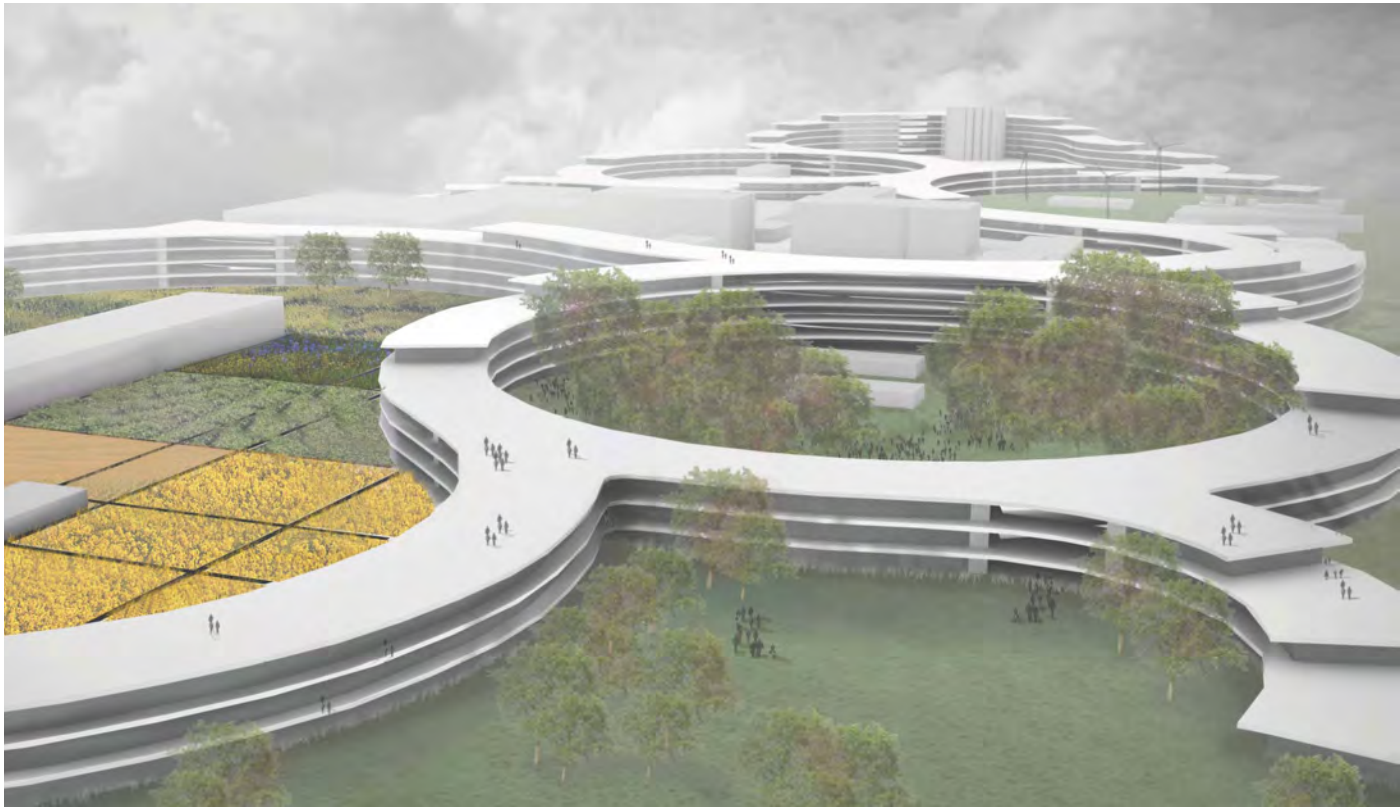
‘Off the Grid’



‘Apple Factory’



‘Urban Plexus’



‘Urban Plexus’

The entry is an insightful megastructure proposal and in terms of scale a rather credible effort at presenting a new structure to link the entire district and its existing buildings into the city of the future. The design provides a good contrast to the old structure while creating agreeable modern living environments. The jury would have liked to see more building types used.

‘Off the Grid’

The entry is a high-quality low-rise plan demonstrating considerable professional skill and focus on the brief. The buildings are agreeable and the environment created is comfortable and human. The addressing of the old buildings could have been solved somewhat differently.

‘Apple Factory’

The entry is somewhat sombre in its presentation, but in its content and form it is a fine example of a utopia where food production and new materials play key roles. The building is more like an independent sculpture than a building designed for its location. The home design fell short of the innovativeness that the overall concept demonstrated.

Upper class

‘Amazing Realm Apartments’

The buildings in the entry are pleasing in their external architecture, and the environment surrounding them is agreeable. The basic idea in the design is good, but its execution does not quite come up to the same standard.

‘Home Trees’

The entry consists of homes constructed on a basic frame, rather interesting as spatial sculptures. There are good ideas for home design in the entry, but the execution does not reach the same level of quality. The buildings are inefficient, with no motivation as to why this is so, and the design is not suitable for the Finnish climate.

‘iShare’

The entry features a communal terraced house, which is all right for complementary construction. The overall concept is weak and shows no vision of the future.

‘Kotimuuri’

The entry presents a logical megastructure that encircles the entire design area. The building opens up outwards at certain locations, respectful of the old structure. The vision of the future in the entry is interesting but does not quite match the aims of the competition.

‘Living Grounds’

The entry contains a wild vision for the future, with housing masses resembling terraced houses elevated to various levels. The entry has interesting points of view, and its scaling is in places quite successful. What the entry lacks is realism, suitability for its location and a human dimension.

‘Nest’

The building in the entry is likeable, opening up to the outside and appropriate in scale. The overall concept is weak and shows no vision of the future.

‘Plant’

The entry features a stylish terraced house with a focus on ecology and energy issues. However, the jury considered the design not to be suitable for the Sopenkorpi district, and the home design does not progress beyond the conceptual level.

‘Take Away’

The entry is strong on energy and various means for using it. The building design is good, although the spaces are not very well organised.

‘Unity’

The entry addresses the question of shared space and community through modular construction. The entry has an overarching concept that contributes to a rich and human environment. Its weaknesses are in its home design.

‘Venue’

The interesting point about this entry is the elevation system, in which ecology is taken into account. There is little attention to the environment in the design, and the environment created by the building is not attractive.

‘Vertical Rowhousing’

The entry features a terraced house plan that is feasible in its scale, introducing a feel of a detached house to high-rise housing. However, the entry does not address the environment in any way; the overall concept is weak and shows no vision of the future.

‘Yatzy’

The entry is a comprehensive and interesting low-rise design that makes for an attractive environment. There are features of interest and a new approach in the urban structure and block structure, but the building design does not quite come up to the same level.

‘Yatzy’



‘Plant’



‘Unity’



‘Venue’



‘Takeaway’



‘iShare’



