

working  
learning  
playing  
**living  
places**

**simon  
architecture  
prize**

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**rules**

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**simon**

With the experience of:



**fundació  
mies van der rohe  
barcelona**

# Contents

## **Working, learning, playing... Living places**

Presentation and scope

## **Lived-in places and places for living**

The Prize structure: categories

## **Make us... get to know your project**

Prize methodology:

documents to be submitted and procedure

# **Working, learning, playing... living places**

## Presentation and scope

On the occasion of the celebration of the firm's centenary in 2016, Simon presents the first edition of Living Places – Simon Architecture Prize, a two-yearly European contest addressed to works completed and put into use over the past two years.

This Prize aims to recognise excellence in architecture. It distinguishes those works which strengthen the ability of adaptability of spaces to reach comfort and well-being to its residents. Architecture which turns into quality places for people's every day lives: for working, learning, playing, ... Architecture to be lived in.

Living Places – Simon Architecture Prize is an initiative on the part of Simon developed by the Mies van der Rohe Foundation.

# Presentation

The celebration of Simon's centenary is the ideal moment to become familiar with the history of the firm and, above all, to set new projects in motion. For this reason, we convene the first edition of Living Places – Simon Architecture Prize, a new architecture prize organised with the collaboration and experience of the Mies van der Rohe Foundation.

A prize that **understands excellence as the provision of an added value**: when interest goes beyond aesthetics and works stand out not so much by virtue of their programme but rather of a quality that makes them unique, in which skill and inventiveness combine as motors to devise precise, specific action strategies.

A prize that **focuses on the realm of the inhabitant**. The inhabitant understood as the user, the citizen, the passer-by, the general public... someone who is one and many at the same time, who constitutes neither the prototype nor the model of any particular lifestyle, who is defined by the relationship generated between activity and the type of space: who plays, works, sleeps, eats, walks, listens, learns, speaks... in the kitchen, in the square, in the office, in the market, in the opera, in the block, in the bedroom, in the park... **who fills spaces with life and endows them with meaning**.

A prize as **a framework for reflection** on the nature of this contribution and the relationship it establishes with this inhabitant. **What does the project contribute?:** more square metres? The creation of public space? Improvement of the surroundings with existing resources? ... And **what effect does this contribution have on the user?:** a feeling of warmth? A feeling of belonging to the place? Comfort? Flexibility and greater freedom of movement?...

## Scope

The contest is open to all works completed and put into use **between January 1 2014 and December 31 2015** and built on European territory. Works that stand out by virtue of their special qualities and worthy of consideration and discussion on the part of the jury within the proposed debate parameters.

An indispensable condition is that such works are in use, that is, that they have been handed over to the inhabitant, to society, to the city... placed at the service of activity in interaction with multiple factors, with that which endows them with their *raison d'être*.

The contest calls for entries from all those architects, urban planners and/or landscapists<sup>1</sup> responsible for the proposed works, resident in any country and regardless of nationality or age. Works may be presented by individuals or by multi-disciplinary teams of which at least one member is an Architect.

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<sup>1</sup> Henceforward referred to collectively as Architect/s.

# Lived-in places and places for living

## The Prize structure: categories

Collective Places and Personal Places constitute the two categories around which the Prize is structured and reflect our interest in architecture planned and explained from the user's perspective. An interest that focuses on experiences that put spaces to the test rather than on degree 0 of architecture frozen in the instants prior to being handed over to society and the city.

# Categories

The definition of the categories around which this Award is structured has to do with this focus on the individual and the links he or she establishes with space, on how individuals appropriate space to themselves, thereby converting it into place.

Making a parallel with the field in which Simon, the proponent of this Award, specialises, the two categories might be defined initially on the basis of the following relationship: in collective places a consensus must be reached among individuals before turning a switch on or off, whereas in personal places it is the individual who decides whether to do so or not.

We might take the room, understood as a minimal unit, as the departure point from which to describe the **Personal Places** category, the place with which we associate our ideal of comfort and privacy. The room is therefore normally associated with the domestic sphere, with the home, which might also be regarded as a personal place. However, to what extent does this depend on the number of people who share the home and the relationship between them? A home may be occupied by a couple with their children and a grandmother, or by five students, or by a couple and their dog, or by three sisters... In these cases, would the home be regarded as a personal or as a collective place? Likewise, a room may also be linked to a wide variety of uses and places: in an office building, as the director's office; in a hospital, as the consultation room; in a geriatric hospital, as a temporary place of residence ... Might the work environment (table, chair, computer...) in an office be regarded as a personal place?

The **Collective Places** category refers to spaces in which community and/or public life unfolds: markets, schools, streets and squares, concert halls, housing blocks, parks... Might collective places be defined as all those places that are not personal? Might a piece of landscaping be regarded as a collective place? Might an airport be regarded as a collective place? Do non-places exist and consequently spaces that would not be eligible for this Prize?

The Prize is structured around two categories that are characterised as being inclusive, not categorical. There is no strict demarcation line between the two: they are conceived as a **guideline for reflection on the personal and collective spheres** in relation to the proposed entry.

The entries must be sensitive to the issues raised above and assigned to one of the two categories. The choice of category will be linked to the most prominent characteristics of the project and must be justified in a written description and audio-visual document (both of which are described in the *Documents to be submitted* section of the next chapter *Make us....get to know your project*).

If the same entry has an equal number of qualities relevant to both categories, it may be assigned to both (in which case it is compulsory to make two separate inscriptions, one per category, and present a different text and video for each inscription).

# **Make us... get to know your project**

Prize methodology:

documents to be submitted and procedure

The focus on the inhabitant is also reflected in the Prize methodology. The video, considered to be an instrument to bring architecture closer to the public in general and to convey the atmosphere of the place, is the main document to be submitted. The participation process includes users, inhabitants and citizens and allows them to propose those works they regard as worthy of consideration on the part of the jury.

# Documents to be submitted

The moving image is a technique increasingly used to explain an architectural project to a client and to make the built result understandable to everyone. Hitherto, the video in architecture has served as a documentary tool, in most cases produced by professional film-makers. For this Prize we propose that Architects, together with users, convey their ideas, challenges and sensations through the moving image.

Besides the video, descriptive texts, drawings, photographs and so on must also be submitted in accordance with the following list:

1. A **video**, lasting 3 minutes maximum and conveying the atmosphere and life of the place.

2. A **descriptive report on the project** in English of 500 words maximum. The report must be divided into two parts (maximum 250 words per part), the first containing an overall description of the project (design concept, location and previously existing conditions, use of materials, etc.) and the second constituting a specific description of the project in terms of the category to which it has been assigned (Personal Places or Collective Places, described above in the *Lived-in places and places for living. The Prize structure: categories* section).

3. **Graphic documents:**

A DIN A2 panel featuring the most significant project drawings and photographs (composed in accordance with the pattern and example you may download from the award website).

A selection of 6 representative and explicative plans and drawings so that the jury may perfectly understand the project.

A selection of 6 photographs of the work (72 dpi/ max 1Mb each).

## Procedure

### Nominators

The participation process in this Award is based on two concepts: the figure of the nominator and the work proposed and those responsible for it.

The nominator proposes the entry. The Architects responsible for the work, their collaborators<sup>2</sup> and the clients or users<sup>3</sup> who wish to do so may assume this role.

The nominator carries out the registration and provides the information on the proposed work (see the *Registration and submission of materials* section below).

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<sup>2</sup> Interior designers, technical architects, suppliers, industrialists...

<sup>3</sup> Any citizen



This contest, therefore, besides contemplating the option that Architects may nominate their own works, is also open, for example, to clients who are very satisfied with the result of their assignment, or to occupants of a space in which they feel very much at home, or to students who go to library which they find very inspiring, or to a supplier who feels he has contributed to a specific project... In short, anyone who wishes to express their appreciation may do so by entering the work in question for the Prize<sup>4</sup>.

### Registration and submission of materials

The participation process involves two steps: registration and submission of material, both exclusively online through the [simonprize.org](http://simonprize.org) website.

The first step is registration, which consists of completing the form in the *Participation* section. Once you have done this you will receive an e-mail with a username, a password and a link through which you may submit the material described in *Documents to be submitted* section.

### Prize

The jury will select 5 finalist works per category, from which they will select 1 winner for each. The Architects responsible for the winning entries will receive a cash prize of **10,000€<sup>5</sup> per category**.

The organisers of the Prize encourage the winners to tell us to what use they will put the prize money.

### Calendar

Presentation of the Prize: June 2016

Registration: until 16th of September 2016

Document submission: until 31st of October 2016

Publication of the finalist entries: November 2016

Jury's verdict: November 2016

Granting ceremony: mid-December 2016 at the Barcelona Pavilion

### Jury

The jury will consist of 5 members and will be announced in September 2016 via the website ([simonprize.org](http://simonprize.org)) and social networks (Facebook: [simonprize](https://www.facebook.com/simonprize)).

The Prize may not be declared void and the jury's verdict will be final.

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<sup>4</sup> So long as they are backed by the Architects responsible

<sup>5</sup> Simon S.A., on behalf of the winners in both categories, will pay into the Spanish Public Treasury the sums of money subject to tax in accordance with legislation currently in force. The tax deduction will be made by the firm Simon S.A.. For its part, the cash prize awarded in this contest will be subject to tax obligations in the winners' income-tax declaration.

