The Rifat Chadirji Prize for Architecture 2020

A Living Pedestrian Bridge Over The Nile
IDEAS COMPETITION
The Rifat Chadirji Prize 2020
An international annual ideas competition responding to local challenges
Call for Entries
Tamayouz Excellence Award is delighted to invite participants to submit their ideas for a living pedestrian bridge over the Nile connecting Midan Al-Tahrir Area to Al Zamalek area and to re-imagine the public space on the east bank of the Nile where the NDP building once stood.

In this brief, participants will find information on all things related to the competition, including the site, competition guidelines, prizes and award ceremony.

To register for the award, click here.
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Egypt

Located in the northeastern corner of Africa and connected to Asia via the Sinai Peninsula, Egypt’s heartland – the Nile River valley and delta – has long been home to many civilisations throughout history, including one of the world’s earliest urban and literate societies: Ancient Egypt.

Ancient Egypt thrived for nearly 3000 years BC thanks to a series of native dynasties that were interspersed with brief periods of foreign rule.

The topography of Egypt is dominated by the Nile River. Its course in Egypt runs for about 750 miles, or 1200 kilometres, and cuts its way through the bare desert. The river’s narrow valley and sharply delineated strip of green land, abundantly fecund, contrasts with the desolation that surrounds it. Pushing north from Lake Nasser, the river’s entrance into southern Egypt is hemmed into its trenchlike valley by bordering cliffs, which disappear as the river approaches Cairo, where it begins to fan out into its delta.
Cairo

The capital of Egypt, Cairo is one of the largest and most populated cities in the world. It has been home to many urban settlements, such as Memphis, which stood for thousands of years, and Fatimid Cairo, which stood for more than 1000 years. Remnants of this era still stand along the banks of the Nile, primarily on the eastern shore, some 500 miles, or 800 kilometres, downstream from the Aswan High Dam. Located in the northeast of the country, Cairo is the gateway to the Nile delta, where the lower Nile separates into the Rosetta and Damietta branches.

Parts of Cairo that were built during the 19th century reveal European influences: highly ornate stone exteriors and cupolas merge with Romanesque doorways. While these elements are prevalent in the transitional zone, the most unusual examples are the Palace of Sakakini and the palace of Baron Empain, founder of Heliopolis, which were built later. In the early modern quarters, built in the 20th century, the architectural style is partly Parisian, with most of the moderately tall buildings constructed of concrete slabs. Architecture near the Nile River features a mixture of styles, though concrete structures with balconies and glass curtain walls are dominant.
The area that surrounds present-day Cairo, especially Memphis, which was once the capital of Egypt, had long been a focal point of Ancient Egypt due to its strategic location just upstream from the Nile Delta. Because of the Nile's movement, the new parts of the city, such as Garden City, Downtown Cairo and Zamalek, are located closest to the riverbank. These areas, which are home to most of the embassies, are surrounded by the older parts of the city. Old Cairo, located south of the city centre, holds the remnants of Fustat and the heart of Egypt's Coptic Christian community – Coptic Cairo. The Boulag district, which lies in the northern part of the city, was born out of a major 16th-century port and is now a major industrial centre.

The Citadel is located east of the city centre, around Islamic Cairo, which dates back to the Fatimid era and the foundation of the city itself. While the eastern half of the city grew haphazardly over the centuries and is now dominated by small lanes, crowded tenements and Islamic architecture, western Cairo is marked by wide boulevards, open spaces and modern architecture that bears European influence. Northern and the very eastern parts of Cairo, which include satellite towns, are among the most recent additions to the city, as they developed in the late 20th and early 21st centuries to accommodate the city's rapid growth. The western bank of the Nile is commonly included within the urban area of Cairo, but it composes the city of Giza and Giza Governorate. See Cairo’s Timeline here
**Bridges over the Nile**

The Nile is a north-flowing river in Africa and is among the world's longest waterways, famed for its ancient history and the archaeological sites along its shores. The fertile Lower Nile gave rise to early Egyptian civilisation and is still home to the Great Pyramids and Sphinx of Giza near Cairo. Sightseeing boats, from luxury liners to traditional felucca sailboats, also cruise between the cities of Luxor and Aswan. Some of the important bridges that cross the Nile are:

**Kasr El Nil Bridge:**
Its structure dates back to 1931, when King Fuad laid its foundation stone to be inaugurated. It links Tahrir Square in Downtown Cairo to the Cairo Opera House in Zamalek. It also offers great views of the Nile and the landmarks scattered along its banks.

**Al Manasterly Wooden Pedestrian Bridge:**
Connecting Old Cairo with Roda Island, the Manasterly Bridge is a commonly used by those who want to visit the Manasterly cultural complex, which includes a palace, Oum Kulthoum Museum and Nilometer, located at the island's southern tip.

**6th October Bridge:**
It is ranked as one of the longest bridges in the world, as its length measures 20.5 kilometers (12.7 miles). It connects the Agouza district in the western part of the city to Gezira (Zamalek Island) and on to the international airport in the eastern part of Cairo, crossing the Nile twice.

**Imbaba Bridge:**
This bridge, built from 1913 to 1925, is a replacement for an older one that connected the city to the Giza train station by rail, where the railway then stretched over 935 kilometers to the Aswan High Dam.

**Giza Railway Bridge:**
Historically, it is the first railway bridge in Egypt, Africa and the Middle East. It was inaugurated in September 1856 to span from Giza to Cairo. It is 535 meters in length and 20 meters wide.
The Neighbourhoods: Al Zamalek

Located on Cairo’s Gezira (Island) in the Nile River, Al Zamalek is an affluent district known for its lavish homes, leafy streets and quiet suburban feel. Having been home to some of Egypt’s most famous figures, like Oum Kolthoum, Al Zamalek is known for its cosmopolitan culture, cuisine and art scene.

Connected to both banks of the river via three bridges - 26th of July Corridor, 6th of October Bridge and Kasr El Nil Bridge - Gezira is split in two by 26th of July Street and a large greenbelt. The island was also once home to 19 and 20th-century palaces, some of which have been converted into hotels and casinos, as well as museums. Zamalek also used to be dominated by large, opulent villas that were erected during the 19th century. While some of these villas are protected from demolition, today, Zamalek is a neighbourhood of apartment buildings of seven to 15 stories, most of which were built in the 1960s and 70s and feature the prevailing contemporary style of those decades.

Cultural attractions in Zamalek include The Cairo Opera House, which opened in 1988 and is Cairo’s main performing arts centre. Its grounds house the Museum of Modern Egyptian Art, or the Gezira Centre for Modern Art, which contains around 10,000 paintings and sculptures on view. There’s also El Sawy Culturewheel and All Saints’ Cathedral, which marks Zamalek’s skyline. Elsewhere in the neighbourhood is the Gezira Sports Club and education institutions, including the Helwan University Faculty of Music Education.
The Neighbourhoods & Landmarks: Maspero, Al Tahrir Square and the Egyptian Museum

Maspero

Named after the French Egyptologist Gaston Maspero who helped establish the Egyptian Museum, the Maspero neighbourhood was once envisioned as Paris on the Nile. Part of the modern city built by Khedive Ismail in the 19th century, Maspero features wide boulevards, traffic circles and stately European-style architecture. The area sits north of the old Egyptian Museum and east of Al Zamalek. It is worthy of mention that the International competition to develop Maspero Triangle, won by Fosters +Partners, is one of the most contemporary interventions in the area.

Al Tahrir Square

Also known as Martyr Square, Tahrir Square is a major public town square in Downtown Cairo that often serves as the backdrop to public demonstrations. At its centre sits a large and busy traffic circle, while nearby is the Egyptian Museum, the Folklore Arts House and the Mogamma government building, as well as the headquarters of the Arab League building.

Egyptian Museum

A prominent landmark built in 1901 and designed by French architect Marcel Dourgnon, the Egyptian Museum is one of the largest museums in the region. With nearly 120,000 items, many of which are important pieces of ancient Egyptian history, the museum also houses the world's largest collection of Pharaonic antiquities and boasts a 19th century Beaux-Arts architecture.
Competition Site

Click for Point A (East Bank)
Click for Point B (West Bank)
Click to Download CAD Drawings, images and recommended readings
Cairo videos on youtube

Landmarks near our competition site:
- Cairo Tower
- MOMA Egypt
- Maspero TV Building
- Point B
- 6 Oct Bridge
- Point A
- Kasr El Nil Bridge
- Old Egypt Museum
- Arab League
The Challenge  Bridges of the 19th and 20th century

Bridges in Cairo, in their diversity of construction systems, materials, scale, type and history are living proof of the ongoing debate between two world-views and two ways of life. Naturally the story of bridges in Cairo, and the world at large, started with the pedestrian or pedestrian-friendly bridges. Pedestrian bridges like Al Manasterly and pedestrian-friendly bridges like Kasr El Nil were certainly erected to facilitate the act of crossing the Nile from one bank to the other. To connect the east and west banks of Cairo. However, the act of physical crossing was not their sole aim. Such bridges were designed with clear intention and great sensitivity to the human scale. They are suspended oases that are capable of crossing the urban hustle and bustle into the tranquility and introspectiveness of the Nile.

Fast forward to the installation of motorway bridges and highways, which came with a clear bias. In favour of the motorised vehicle and everything it represents; an entire worldview based on speed, mass-production, mechanical efficiency and capitalistic definitions of productivity and welfare. Bridges, like the 6th of October Bridge, do have wide sidewalks, but the materiality, design and bridge furnishing (or the lack thereof) are evidence of the motor-based and mechanically utilitarian intent.

The spontaneous and instinctive response of the citizens of Cairo, to these two world-views, has been truly amazing. The old and young sit calmly and patiently with their fishing rods dangling down from incredible heights, while newly-wedded brides and grooms disembark their vehicles to pose for pictures with the Nile in the background. At the same time, sweet-potato carts and juice and flower vendors are just a few more examples of where the Caireans' hearts are. For without much talk and through their individual and sporadic acts, they transform the most hostile, brutalist and utilitarian into a festival for life.

This leaves us with the question: If the people of Cairo are capable of inhabiting the seemingly uninhabitable in such colourful ways, what would the result be if bridges were designed in ways that take into consideration their zest for life?

Like the Nile it crosses, every new bridge in Cairo could potentially, depending on the design approach, be a connector enhancing the city's multi-layered fabric or an urban edge that ruptures the city's urban, social, characteristic, spiritual and historical continuity. The fact that Egypt is developing its new administrative capital tens of kilometres to the east of Cairo leaves the latter with a golden opportunity to regenerate itself and its millennial narrative into a better and more meaningful future.

The challenge is global and an opportunity to advocate an ‘alternative living' agenda for the 21st century that is capable of addressing the ailments of the highly motorised cities of the world and introducing better solutions for every grand city around the globe.
The Challenge: Response

Participants are asked to:

- Design a living pedestrian bridge over the Nile connecting Midan Al-Tahrir Area (East Bank) to Al Zamalek area (West Bank).
- Re-imagine the public space on the east bank of the Nile where the NDP building once stood, in and of itself but also in relation to Tahrir Square and the other important focal points on both the east and west banks.

The solution should offer a seed for new ways of life across Cairo, and potentially other megalopolises across the world. It should also be capable of identifying and regenerating interest in the existing activities on both banks, as well as suggest new activities, taking into consideration the entire context, which extends southwards to the Kasr El Nil bridge, where traffic could be reconsidered, and incorporates the corniche on both banks.
The Challenge: Design Programme

The Bridge:
A Living/Habitable Bridge = Accommodates functions
It should not be merely a pedestrian bridge linking two sides, it should be a cultural piazza over the Nile, a destination in itself with a balanced mix of:

- Cultural and touristic use: visitors centre and tourist information.
- Recreational and retail uses.
- Administrative use: office, plant room, maintenance and storage.
- Hardscape (benches, lighting, other creative street furnishing).
- Piazza, public gardens and softscape.
- Observation decks overlooking the river and the rest of the city.
- Unobstructed emergency route.

The East Bank:
- A public space connected to the wider context of the east bank.
- Bridge landing providing accessibility for all.

The West Bank:
- Bridge landing providing accessibility for all at Al Masala Garden.

Things to consider
- The bridge is pedestrian only. It should be at least 300m long, with a width to be decided by the designer.

- Headroom clearance over any road traffic: 5.5m minimum.

- Bridge's headroom over river traffic: 13m minimum.

- River navigable span (distance between two bridge piers): 100m minimum for two way navigation.

- River Navigable span (distance between two bridge piers): 50m minimum for one way navigation.

- Traffic could be reconsidered and the corniche on both banks can be incorporated.

- The urban interventions are not required to be discussed in great detail, rather in terms of general strategy and general approaches. Whereas, the actual solutions of the habitable bridge must be presented to the highest level of detail possible.
Regulations

1. This is an anonymous competition and the Unique Registration Number is the only means of identification.
2. The official language of the award is English.
3. The registration fee for this award is non-refundable.
4. Contacting the jury is prohibited.
5. As the award’s organiser, Tamayouz Excellence Award reserves the right to modify the award schedule if deemed necessary.
6. Entries will not be reviewed if rules or submission requirements are not followed.
7. Participation assumes acceptance of the regulations.

Evaluation

RELEVANCE - A clear declaration of conditions that set the contextual parameters of the project through identification of local challenges, construction and living culture.

RESPONSE - Aspirational, transformative and original projects with a programmatic response to existing environmental, social conditions and local challenges. Clarity of design process.

RESOLUTION - A clearly declared design intent and non-intrusive vision. Spatial, material and technical realisation.

The old London bridge completed in 1209
Submission Requirements

Participants are required to submit the following (in one zip file named after the **unique registration number**):

1 - **One - A0 board in JPEG format.** Every team is encouraged to submit all the information they consider necessary to explain their proposal. Content may include but is not limited to plans, sections, elevations, visualisations, diagrams, etc. The resolution of the boards must be **300dpi** with the **unique registration number** placed in the **top left corner** of the board in **18 pt** font.

2 - A word document file containing the project statement (**250 words max**) explaining the design proposal.

3 - Submit your entry by using the upload link in your registration confirmation email.

**NOTE:** All files must be named after the **unique registration number**
The winners of the Rifat Chadirji Prize 2020 will receive the following prizes:

**Prize Winner**
- The Rifat Chadirji Prize Statuette
- $5,000 & Certificate
- Trip to the 2020 Award Ceremony (Flights and Hotel)

**2nd & 3rd Prizes**
- $1,000 Each
- Certificate
- Trip to the 2020 Award Ceremony (Flights and Hotel)

**7 x Honourable Mentions**
- Certificates
- Publication of work in the annual book.

**Top 50 & Top 20**
- Published work on our website, social media pages and in Exhibitions.

**The Ceremony**

An invitation to attend the Tamayouz Award Annual Ceremony for the Top 10 mentioned above, The TOP 3 and People’s Choice Award winners will have their flight and accommodation costs covered by the organiser of the prize; Tamayouz Excellence Award, The date of Tamayouz Excellence Award’s annual prize-giving ceremony will be announced at a later date.
Schedule
January 2020 - Competition Launch + Early registration
01/March/2020 - Start of the Standard registration
01/August/2020 - Last chance to register
30/August/2020 - Closing date for Registration
01/September/2020 - Submissions deadline
November/2020 - Announcement of Results

2020 - Annual Tamayouz Excellence Award Ceremony
All Deadlines are 11:59 pm GMT (London)

Registration
Early Registration: $70 from 10/January/2020 - 07/April/2020
Standard Registration: $85 from 08/April/2020 - 07/July/2020
Late Registration: $100 from 08/July/2020 - End of registration period

REGISTER HERE

Eligibility
Architects, students, engineers and designers are invited to participate in this prize. Participation can be on an individual or team basis (maximum of six team members). We encourage the participation of multidisciplinary teams. Under no circumstances will jury panel members, organisers or any of their family members be allowed to participate in this competition.
The judging panels of Tamayouz Excellence Award always comprise world class architects, engineers, planners, designers and academics. The judging panel for the Rifat chadirji Prize for Architecture 2020 will be announced soon.

2012: Dame Zaha Hadid, DBE - UK
Judging Panel Chair

2019: Our judging panel for Tamayouz Excellence Award
Coventry University, UK

Rifat Chadirji Prize 2019 - Barjeel Museums Judging Panel (above):
- Dia Azzawi, celebrated Iraqi artist
- Dr Rasem Badran, award-winning architect and founder of Dar Al-Omran
- Stephen Austin, Head of School - Coventry University
- Claudia Linders, Dean of architecture and urbanism at Fontys Academy
- Fernando Olba, principal of Fernando Olba Arquitectura +Urbanismo
- Mandy Franz, senior associate at MICA Architects
- Nahed Jawad, academic and principal at Nahed Jawad Design
- Philip Michael Wolfson, founder of Wolfson Design
- Ahmed Al-Mallak, Tamayouz Excellence Award
Tamayouz Award 2016 Ceremony

The 2016 Tamayouz Excellence Award Ceremony was hosted by the Iraqi Business Council in Jordan at the Grand Millennium Hotel in Amman.
Tamayouz Award 2017 Ceremony

The 2017 Tamayouz Excellence Award Ceremony was hosted by the Iraqi Business Council in Jordan at the Grand Millennium Hotel, Amman

For the 2017 Tamayouz Ceremony in Amman Click HERE
Tamayouz Award 2018 Ceremony

The 2018 Tamayouz Excellence Award Ceremony was hosted by the Iraqi Business Council in Jordan at the Grand Millennium Hotel, Amman.
Tamayouz Award 2019 Ceremony

The 2019 Tamayouz Excellence Award Ceremony was hosted by the Iraqi Business Council in Jordan at the Le Royal Hotel, Amman

For the 2019 Tamayouz Ceremony in Amman Click [HERE](#)
The Rifat Chadirji Statuette by Dia Azzawi

Internationally celebrated Iraqi Artist Dia Azzawi designed the Rifat Chadirji Prize statuette, a sculpture inspired by the built work of Rifat Chadirji. Azzawi has generously designed and produced 25 sculptures as a gift to Tamayouz Award in appreciation of Rifat Chadirji’s cultural role in the Arab World.

Born in Baghdad in 1939, Dia Azzawi started his artistic career in 1964, after graduating from the Institute of Fine Arts in Baghdad and completing a degree in archaeology from Baghdad University in 1962. Through exhibitions of his work, his art features in many collections including at the Museums of Modern Art in Baghdad, Damascus and Tunis; Jeddah International Airport; British Museum, Tate Modern, and Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Institut du Monde Arabe, Bibliothèque Nationale de France and Colas Foundation, Paris; Gulbenkian Collection, Barcelona.
About the prize

This award was established in 2017 as part of the Tamayouz Excellence Award programme of championing and celebrating the best of architecture. The prize is named after Dr Rifat Chadirji (1926), a great Iraqi architect who has left an incredible impact on the built environment of Iraq and whose influence and importance, which extends beyond built projects, remains greatly felt today.

The Rifat Chadirji Prize is a thematic, open ideas, international prize focusing on design proposals responding to local challenges and opportunities. The primary objective is to establish an accessible source of ideas to respond to social challenges through design.

“Let us architects acknowledge our problems and make art of them. Let us accept our fate and celebrate our art as beautifully as Rifat Chadirji celebrated his.” Robert Venturi - 1984
Information
An online source to get further information:
   a. A closer look at Cairo’s bridges.

Suggested Readings:
   c. Connecting Cairo to the Nile: Renewing life and heritage on the Nile, Institute of Urban and Regional Planning University of California, Berkeley 94720
   d. Living Bridges: The inhabited bridge - Past Present and Future by Peter Murray.

For Images, essential readings and drawings Download Information Pack here

Terms and Conditions
Please check all terms and conditions on www.rifatchadirji.com

CONTACT
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7 Awards and competitions are running throughout 2020 with our annual prize giving ceremony at the end of the year.