



NKA FOUNDATION
serving the underserved communities

3RD Earth Architecture Competition **DESIGNING FOR THE ARTS**

Registration and Submission of Entries:

AUGUST 1 – OCTOBER 30, 2015

What should modern housing for the arts built with earth look like? What would happen if you ask an emerging architect or designer to design a mud house type for an arts village in Ghana? How buildable would the design be?

Join Designing for the Arts competition and find out!

Contact: info@nkafoundation.org / www.nkafoundation.org

Nka Foundation announces a call for entries for its **3rd Earth Architecture Competition**, Designing for the Arts, an open source competition to encourage recent graduates and students of architecture, design and others from around the world to design a house for the arts that can be built with local materials in Ghana. Registration and submission of entries run from **August 1 to October 30, 2015**.

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DESIGN PROBLEM

What should modern housing for the arts built with earth look like?

What would happen if you ask an emerging architect or designer to design a mud house type for an arts village in Ghana? How buildable would the design be?

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DESIGN BRIEF

The design challenge is for designers, architects, engineers and builders to use their creativity to come up with innovative designs for modest, affordable houses that can be built locally to replace the rural mud house type in Ghana. The challenge is to design a house type of about 2400 sq feet that sleeps 8 to 10 persons to be built on a plot size of 80 x 100 feet. Total costs of constructing the design entry must not exceed \$7,000 (USD) for materials and labor; land value is excluded from this price point. You should design the unit for construction by maximum use of earth and local labor in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The built environment is to provide a place of stay for 8 to 10 international participants who come to immerse in the local culture to create works or collaborate on a community project. The multi-user dwelling is to be designed for use by persons in one area of the creative arts. This means that the unit should be designed for either musicians, theatre artists, potters, sculptors, painters, textile artists, designers, writers, or media arts practitioners. Because the construction of best design entries is a priority, projects that have regards for self-construction and scalable design are sort. Each design team gets an opportunity to build their design entry at the arts village in Ghana or another site of their choice. Be a part of this! Let's create change where it is most needed.

What is the preferred construction method for the winning entries?

The method to be used to build your design can be cob construction, rammed earth, mud brick, poured earth by formwork, or any other earth construction technique that can be easily learned by local labor. Roof design should involve corrugated zinc sheets, which is the conventional roofing materials in the region. This is because zinc roofing stands the heavy rainfall better. Other roofing methods such as vault roof, fired mud roof and canvas roof are all possibilities but not yet tested to stand the region's heavy rain fall. Jurors will award prizes for first, second and third place consisting of a commemorative certificate and cash prizes to the winning designs as follows:

- 1st prize** \$1,500 or construction of design in Ghana plus a trip to Ghana for a workshop to build the winning design (in case the winner does not reside in Ghana and to a maximum of 1 person);
- 2nd prize** Construction or \$1,000 and
- 3rd prize** Construction or \$500.

Honorable mentions may be awarded at the discretion of the jury but will receive no cash prize.

Registration and submission of entries run from **August 1 to October 30, 2015**.

The registration fee per entry is \$60 for individual and \$80 for a team.

Here is where to register: <https://eventbrite.com/event/16829232688/> and submit your design entry via mudhousedesign@mail.com. For additional information, see the competition discussion board: <http://nkaprojects.boards.net>.

PROJECT ORGANIZER

Nka Foundation is a nonprofit organization in the United States that exists to serve underserved communities in Africa and similar places through arts and design education. At Abetenim in the Ashanti Region of Ghana, we are building an arts village designed as a learning center to provide stable places for creative people from the region and other countries to live, work, learn and create. The arts village social housing draws on asset-based approach to rural community development by cultural immersion and mobilization of existing, but often unrecognized abundant local resources to drive the development process. Throughout the year, we organize international workshops such as earth architecture workshops and community arts workshops. From 2008 through 2010, our organization organized workshops and symposium series in partnerships with some universities in Ghana and Mali to stimulate conversations and artistic interventions for solutions to the problem of tapping local resources for sustainable development in sub-Saharan Africa. By 2009, we felt a deep need to create an arts village of our own to continue to address the problem through design-build workshops, artist-in-residence, architecture competitions, conferences and outreach to the local schools.



THE BACKGROUND

Nka Foundation is issuing a challenge to the architecture world to help design a highly scalable housing to replace the rural mud house type. The basic idea is generate user-centered designs for low-tech construction to create durable and scalable house types by exploring the accumulated knowledge about ways of building in a tropical climate. We emphasize durable housing because, in Ghana, as in other countries in West Africa, stereotypes about buildings made of earth persist because of poor construction.

In light of this, the competition promotes open source design, which implies that the submitted designs will be available for all to appreciate, use, or improve them to generate more practical and contemporary design solutions for the region. Our aspiration is to help develop a contemporary earth architecture tradition for the region and along the way, create arts villages to promote arts and design education. The long-term goal is to enable the Ghanaian population and lots of other places, to overcome the stigma that mud architecture is architecture for the very poor.

IMPORTANT DATES

- ▶ REGISTRATION OPENS: August 1, 2015
- ▶ SUBMISSIONS: September 1 - October 30, 2015
- ▶ REGISTRATION DEADLINE: October 20, 2015
- ▶ SELECTION OF PROJECTS BY THE JURY: November 13 - November 30, 2015
- ▶ PRESS RELEASE ON THE WINNING PROJECTS: December 7, 2015
- ▶ DESIGN-BUILD WORKSHOPS TO REALIZE THE WINNING DESIGNS: May 2016 to December 2017

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

(1) An individual or a design team can submit an entry to the Designing for the Arts competition.

The individual participant can be a student or a graduate since 31st January 2010 and the design team can be two or more persons. A team can submit more than one entry. Each team shall identify one team member as its Point of Contact ("Point of Contact") during the submission process.

(2) In order to enter the design contest, you must register here:

<https://eventbrite.com/event/16829232688/>

The registration fee per entry is \$60 for individual and \$80 for a team. On your Eventbrite ticket, you will see a 9-digit order #. This is your registration number for one design entry. If you are submitting more than one entry, each design entry requires a separate ticket. With your entry ticket number submit your design entry via mudhousedesign@mail.com.

If you want to pay by check, send us an e-mail: info@nkafoundation.org / www.nkafoundation.org and the following information: **Team Name, Team Leader, Name, Phone Number and Email** for Each Team Member. To submit your design, place your ticket number and the title of the project (no name) on all pages of your design submission to allow the jury to select blindly.

(3) SUBMISSION FORMAT:

(1) Text file (Word format) containing the design statement (600 words max) for publication purposes. The design statement should include material description, budget in USD, and the entrants' personal information including name, profession, address, and email address.

(2) Three A1 presentation boards submitted as JPG files of high-quality resolution to be printed in landscape format. For uploading to the competition board, the file size of each presentation board to be submitted must not exceed 300 kb. We will request a large file on the presentation board for the purpose of jury or publications. The upper right corner of each board must contain the entry ticket number. There should not be any marks or any other form of identification, less the entry is disqualified. The files must be named after the ticket number followed by the board number.

For example, 112334567-1.jpg, 112334567_2.jpg, and 112334567_3.jpg

(for your presentation boards). Required submittals include the site plan, floor plan, elevations, sections, perspective views, roof plan, construction details and sequences (as appropriate) and project statement explaining the design. Submissions must be in English language.

(4) Of the nominated projects (20), there will be three winning projects, according to the highest scores. Jurors will award prizes for first, second and third place consisting of a commemorative certificate and cash prizes to the winning designs as follows:

1st prize \$1,500 or Construction of design in Ghana plus a trip to Ghana for a workshop to build the winning design (in case the winner does not reside in Ghana and to a maximum of 1 person);

2nd prize Construction or \$1,000 and

3rd prize Construction or \$500.

Honorable mentions may be awarded at the discretion of the jury but will receive no cash prize.

(5) Judging criteria involve:

(1) Functionality: space patterns and usage as a house type for the arts, climatic performance, and sustainability over time;

(2) Aesthetics: visual/aesthetic appeal; and

(3) Technical: adaptive/ creative use of abundant local materials and labor to the degree they enhance the design, resource efficient construction process, and attention to scalability and construction budget. Decisions of the jury will be final and binding.

(6) Q&A: Registered participants may post questions or share materials at <http://nkaprojects.boards.net> or by email only, to the address: mudhousedesign@mail.com. The deadline for questions is October 20, 2015. The promoter will continually post replies to all questions received on the competition discussion board: <http://nkaprojects.boards.net>

(7) Any person entering this contest shall certify and guarantee the organisers that he/she is the sole author of the project and by participating, each contestant grants their free and exclusive consent that all designs and ideas will be published and shared to inspire others. By entering the competition, all participants agree to all the conditions of participation in the competition.

MAIN JURY

The body of the jurors is to be made public by **October 20, 2015**, at the latest, on the competition board: <http://nkaprojects.boards.net>.

NORTH



EAST



WEST



SOUTH



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

Q. Do you have a website with detail about the competition?

Nka Foundation's website is <http://www.nkafoundation.org>. Registered participants will get invitation to an Online forum, which is: <http://nkaprojects.boards.net>, where the participants can interact and exchange ideas with other users and team up with fellow designers to complement their skills to achieve best results.

Q. What do I need to do to participate in the design competition?

Pay the entry fee Online here: <https://eventbrite.com/event/16829232688/> to get your entry ticket, create a design proposal, and submit your design via mudhousedesign@mail.com.

Q. Should every member of the design team be a student or a graduate since 31st January 2010?

The design competition is open to all emerging architects and designers. The design team can consist of students at any level of education or recent graduates, or a mixed group of students and emerging practitioners in architecture or design. Non architecture or design practitioners can also take part in this competition regardless of years of practice. These includes landscape architects, engineers, and builders. We think that it seems an unfair competition to allow established practitioners with extensive years of professional practice and awards to compete with advance undergraduate, ents.

Q. What is next after I have registered?

Join us at: <http://nkaprojects.boards.net>. It is an Open Forum to stimulate exchange of useful ideas through discussions, responding to participants' questions and offering feedbacks on their design concepts. We have uploaded many useful documents there to help you generate a more informed design response.

Q. Where is the construction site, is it on the map?

Yes, it is on Google map, search for for the name "Abetenim" in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Electric power is by public grid but power supply is irregular. There is mecahnized well water that supplies water to all units. The site does not have public sewage system; thus, the septic tank system is a common practice.

Q. What are the amenities that are most needed for a unit we are to design?

Bedrooms for 8-10 people, a kitchen, 2 toilets/baths and a common social space.

Q. Where do I find information about the costs of local building materials?

Here is a best best site: <http://www.bmghana.com> and you may google "building materials in Ghana" to see other sources. In general, to roof 2400 sq feet unit you will need about 20 packets of corrugated zinc sheets at \$130 per packet. 1 bag of cement is \$11. Expect to pay the local skilled laborer about \$10 per day and unskilled laborer \$7 per day. And keep in mind that prizes are subject to change because of inflation.

Q. Can you tell us more about the climate of the region where the project will be constructed?

Ashanti Region of Ghana falls within the warm-humid climatic zone. Air temperatures remain moderately high, between 21 and 32 degrees C, with little variation between day and night. Traditionally, earth-walled courtyard houses are typical with broad overhanging eaves to shade the exterior walls. Pitched roofs covered with corrugated metallic sheets are common in the warm-humid climates of Ghana. Windows are large and fully openable. Fixed windows are not climatically preferable in the warm-humid climates.

For additional information, see:

http://www.arcghana.org/architecture_southernghana.htm

Q. I need more information on architecture of the project area?

Here is a list to get you started:

(1) <http://www.scribd.com/doc/77284395/The-transformation-of-the-urban-structure-of-Kumasi-Studio-Ghana-2010-2011>

(2) <http://collections.infocollections.org/ukedu/en/d/Jsk02ce/3.4.html>

(3) http://lib.ugent.be/fulltxt/RUG01/001/887/157/RUG01-001887157_2012_0001_AC.pdf

Q. Can we submit more than one project?

Yes, but each project must have a unique registration number. If you are submitting more than one entry, each design entry requires a separate ticket.

Q. Do we need to submit hard copies of the boards?

No, this is a digital competition. You have to send your boards by e-mail to mudhousedesign@mail.com between September 1 - October 30, 2015 and upload low resolution jpgs (3 boards of 300 kb each) of your design entry to the competition board at <http://nkaprojects.boards.net/board/2/designing-arts-earth-architecture-competition> between October 30 and 31, 2015. That is, upload the three low jpg files of your project not later than 11.59 pm of US Central Time zone on October 31, 2015.

Q. Can we submit our boards in Spanish or French?

No, English is the only accepted language.

Q. Can you supply some photos of mud architecture from the region?

You will find plenty of great images of architecture from the region if you google African architecture (Ashanti) or Ashanti architecture. Also on the discussion board, <http://nkaprojects.boards.net>, we have downloaded site photos and publications about the area.

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Brochure and poster designed by Iva Stastrny Brosig of designplus.hr, an Online volunteer mobilized through www.onlinevolunteering.org