

Competition Guidelines

The Competition

Project Statement

HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) presents the 2022 Innovation in Affordable Housing Student Design and Planning Competition. Now in its ninth year, the competition invites teams of students pursuing graduate degrees to participate. The competition uniquely focuses on proposed solutions that demonstrate the interdisciplinary teams' understanding of community, population served, housing affordability, and the development process, including design and finance.

The jury will select innovative solutions that demonstrate originality, incorporating current best practices in design and finance, with high-level consideration given to the affordability and sustainability of the project. Equal weight will be given to social, financial, environmental, planning & design, and construction issues address by the proposals.

PD&R will be partnering with a Public Housing Authority (PHA) to identify a real-world affordable housing challenge for the competition. The 2022 partnering PHA is Atlanta Housing in Atlanta, GA.

As teams develop their proposals, the competition challenges them to apply innovative design strategies, while being thoughtful of the cultural and social context of the partnering community. Additionally, submissions should address the long-term needs of the residents, focusing on enhancing engagement and connectivity to the larger surrounding community. This aspect of the project cannot be overstated, as quality of life for residents and the creation of true, vibrant neighborhoods goes beyond attention to physical structure.

First and foremost, entries will be evaluated for solutions that demonstrate innovative, creative and imaginative approaches. In past competitions, jurors and housing authority partners have been most impressed by original thinking, so don't be afraid – in fact, teams are encouraged – to think outside of the box.

While the competition is based on an existing site selected by the housing authority, there is no guarantee that the solutions offered by the winning team will be incorporated. To the greatest extent possible, students should attempt to address potential challenges with implementing their solutions.

Competition Schedule

09-13-2021	Competition launch; registration opens
11-03-2021	Deadline for teams to register: Noon Eastern Daylight Time
11-04-2021	Detailed Program Site and Housing Authority announced
11-08-2021	Master Class on Affordable Housing Tax Credit Development; 2:00 – 4:00 pm Eastern Standard Time (Optional)

11-17-2021	Deadline to submit a finalized team roster, including all team member names and contact information: Noon Eastern Time
01-24-2022	Deadline for teams to submit Phase I: Noon Eastern Standard Time
02-17-2022	Finalists announced; Phase II released
Early-March 2022	Site visit for finalists (travel conditions permitting)
Mid-April 2022	Phase II submissions due
Mid-April 2022	Final presentations and awards ceremony in DC (travel conditions permitting)

Awards and Recognition

\$20,000	First Place
\$10,000	Runner Up
\$5,000	Finalists

Eligibility

- The competition is open to current graduate students working as a team, with a minimum of three and a maximum of five students.
- Teams should represent various disciplines as the evaluation criteria include design, construction, planning, financial, environmental, and social issues.
- Each team must have students representing at least three disciplines that grant three different degrees, at least one of which must be from an architectural or design-related program, and one must be from a non-design-related discipline. For example, teams might comprise graduate students in architecture, planning, public policy, finance, business administration, and real estate development.
- Each team must work with one faculty advisor who may be from any of the team-represented disciplines and who serves only in an advisory capacity. The faculty advisor is not an active team participant.
- Students from different accredited educational institutions in the U.S. may combine to form a single team.
- Submissions may be the product of work in a design studio or related class.
- Team leaders must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents; teams must comprise of at least three students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents. The remaining team students may be international students.
- Due to federal requirements, only U.S. citizens or permanent residents are eligible to receive cash awards.

Official Details

The Project

Atlanta Housing (AH) is seeking to transform **13.12 acres** of developable land (up to **6M sq. ft.** of as-of-right developable area, **4.3M** of which is allowed for residential) into a vibrant mixed-use community that includes affordable and market-rate housing, office, retail, hospitality, and

open space that seamlessly integrates with the existing cultural facilities that will remain on site. The site has the potential to become a new, world-class civic anchor and mixed-use neighborhood in the heart of Atlanta.

Please refer to the [resources](#) provided by Atlanta Housing for additional project information.

The Site

The historical significance of the Boisfeuillet Jones Atlanta Civic Center and the land it sits on stretches far beyond recent memory and serves as the driver for the vision of a new, restorative development on the site. The site was originally home to Buttermilk Bottom, a community of approximately 16,000 people that took root in the early 1900s. By the 1940s, the community was well established as an African American enclave. Like other predominantly Black neighborhoods in Atlanta at the time, Buttermilk Bottom was considered a blighted area by city officials and eventually targeted for urban renewal. In the 1960s, the city demolished the neighborhood to make way for a new plan, which prioritized grand civic venues over neighborhood housing. Ironically, the “civic promise” envisioned by city leaders resulted in the dispersion of the existing residents and businesses and the elimination of the community. The resulting plan also established a lasting barrier between the historic Old Fourth Ward and new growth along Peachtree Street; a gap that is still present in the urban fabric today.

Despite its rather disadvantageous beginning, the new Civic Center complex represented the city’s effort to establish a civic and iconic home for the arts in the heart of Atlanta. The Civic Center first opened in 1967, serving as an entertainment venue and convention center, hosting local, regional, and national performances and events until its closure in 2014. The complex includes a 4,600-seat Performing Arts Center with and a 125,000 sq. ft. Exhibition Hall. Both buildings’ entrances center on a formal plaza and fountain that continue the tradition of cultural institutions serving as both an iconic landmark and public amenity for residents.

In 2017, AH acquired the site from the City of Atlanta aiming to develop affordable housing in a mixed-use, mixed-income setting. The redevelopment of the land adjacent to these cultural facilities offers a unique opportunity to restore the site through the creation of a vibrant residential community. While acknowledging the historical significances of Buttermilk Bottom, it now presents an opportunity to chart a new future for the site. By integrating a new mixed-income community with regenerated civic anchors, dynamic supporting uses, and the surrounding neighborhood the successful development will be instrumental in realizing the site’s civic promise.

Please refer to the [resources](#) provided by Atlanta Housing for additional site information.

Affordability

Based on Area Median Income (AMI), maximum rents will vary, as the rent structure is a sliding scale based on a percentage of net adjusted income. Please refer to the [resources](#) provided by Atlanta Housing for additional affordability information.

Competition Structure

The competition is conducted in two phases:

Phase I: The following are required:

- A schematic design level site plan, schematic floor plans, section and building massing.
- Preliminary pro forma, as well as other financial calculations and leveraging using the [template provided by HUD](#). Note: financing schemes should consider the overreliance on grant funding and capacity of PHA's to leverage private funding sources realistically.

The evaluation criteria emphasize innovation and an understanding of and provision for services for the specified constituency, planning context (including zoning), and economic considerations related to affordable housing development (including financing, first cost, maintenance and operation, rental subsidies, etc.), as well as design.

Phase I submissions will be evaluated by an independent subject-matter-expert panel of jurors, and four finalist teams will be selected to continue to Phase II based on the criteria described in the Planning and Design Criteria document.

Phase II: Teams will be challenged to further refine their solutions, incorporating more detail, develop floor plans, refine their pro forma and analyses (economic, energy, etc.). Note, teams are encouraged to provide HUD with their site designs in CADD files, to offer and for the benefit of the partnering PHA in their utilization and examination of final design scheme proposals. Teams **will not** be scored or evaluated on their CADD files and submitting these are optional, as they will be used for informational purposes only.

In early to mid-March 2022 finalists will have the opportunity to travel to the project site for a walk-thru and meeting with housing authority management and staff (travel conditions permitting).

The final presentations and award ceremony will be held in mid-April 2022 at HUD HQ in Washington, D.C. (travel conditions permitting). Travel expenses for both the site visit and final events will be paid for two members of each finalist team. Additional team members are encouraged to attend; however, travel costs will not be covered and will need to be arranged independently.

Evaluation Criteria

Teams will be evaluated on their ability to:

- Defend design and planning decisions.
- Provide enough detail to communicate innovation and innovative approaches to all aspects of the solution (e.g., planning, design, construction, planning, environmental, and social).
- Demonstrate innovative approaches to feasible financing, leveraging, and public/private collaboration. Note: Financing schemes should consider the overreliance on grant funding and capacity of PHA's to leverage private funding sources realistically.

Phase I Submissions

In the schematic phase, it is not necessary to provide a high level of detail. Teams should provide drawings and descriptions that best characterize concepts to the jury. General layouts will likely accomplish this and should include schematic site plan, building plans and sections, massing, and energy and financial analysis. Demonstration of the team's understanding of the social, financial, environmental, design, and construction issues is paramount.

- **Narrative** (three-page maximum)
 - Include rationale and demonstrate an understanding of the community, planning, resident needs and provision of community services, and financing.
 - Be compelling. Focus on your description of what is innovative about your approach including, site planning, building configurations, materials and methods selection, mechanical systems, and community integration. Highlight unique and novel aspects of your project.
 - Be clear and concise.
- **Graphics** (maximum four slides – PowerPoint or other)
 - Teams should provide drawings and descriptions that best communicate their solution to the jury.
 - The presentation should include graphics and analyses that visually convey critical and central tenets of your solution, such as schematic floor plans, section and building massing.
 - Slide One MUST include the Site Plan.
- **Financial**
 - Pro forma, using the [template](#) (provided by HUD).
 - Phase I financial submission should focus on sources and uses; a more detailed financial analysis will be required in Phase II.

Instructions for submission

- All submissions are to be electronic files, uploaded to the [competition website](#).
- Written narrative (PDF or Word) to be on standard, white 8.5 x 11-inch paper, single-spaced and in a legible font (e.g., Times New Roman). The font size should be 11 pt. Set document margins to 1 inch on all sides.

Instructions for uploading (A link to upload submissions will be provided to participating teams ahead of the Phase I deadline.)

- Filename [e.g., [team ID number]_01_graphic_01]
- Filename [e.g., [team ID number]_01_narrative_01]
- Filename [e.g., [team ID number]_01_financial_01]

Phase II Submissions

Finalist teams will present Phase II submissions in person to the jury in front of an audience at HUD HQ in Washington, D.C. (travel conditions permitting). The presentation will be webcast.

A link to view the webcast will be available to registered attendees of the event. More information will be provided closer to the event date.

- The final submission is limited to six (6) slides, plus title and conclusion slide if desired, which may not contain presentation content (total of eight slides).
- Presentation files (ppt or other) must be 16 x 9 widescreen format with a non-white background (e.g., dark blue, black, etc.).

In addition to the slide presentation, each team must prepare two (2) presentation boards, 20" X 30" maximum size, which will be displayed during the presentations. Easels will be provided.

The Solution

Successful projects will solve for the design criteria and will demonstrate:

- An understanding of the needs of the intended residents and how those needs will be addressed innovatively in your design solution.
- Knowledge and understanding of codes and zoning restrictions and their impact on your solution.
- How your solution creatively responds to the opportunities and constraints imposed by the site.
- Knowledge and understanding of energy, water, resource efficiency, resiliency, and renewable energy strategies and how they can be incorporated into your design solution.
- How your solution integrates into the neighborhood and community.
- How your solution equitably addresses past injustices based on race, income, or other critical demographic and cultural differences.
- How your solution engages the community, and how diversity, equity and inclusion play a role.
- Knowledge and understanding of financing opportunities and constraints.
- Development and application of innovative financing solutions through leveraging and partnerships.
- Integration of best practices and technology into your solution.

The Jury

The jury will be announced at a later date.

Questions

During the competition, teams may send questions in writing to IAH@huduser.gov. Answers will be posted on the website throughout the competition. Please check the website Q&A page regularly.

HUD reserves the right to edit submitted questions before posting them to the website. HUD also reserves the right not to answer all questions and not post redundant questions or remarks deemed to be inappropriate or irrelevant.

Under *no circumstances* should there be any communication regarding the competition other than in the manner stipulated here, with HUD PD&R, or the housing authority staff or consultants who are working or have worked on the project, or the competition jury.

No phone calls or other contact is allowed with HUD, the partnering housing authority, or to competition jurors. Teams contacting HUD, the partnering housing authority, and/or jurors will be eliminated.

Terms and Conditions

Copyrights

By participating in this challenge, each member of the Student Team certifies that their Student Team's submission was created by the Student Team and that it is free of any copyright trademark, patent rights, or other intellectual property held by any other party.

HUD reserves the right to disqualify submissions containing material suspected of being intellectual property owned by another individual or entity and that cannot be proved to be original to the entrant.

HUD will claim no rights to intellectual property. Individuals on the Student Team will retain intellectual property ownership as applicable arising from their entry.

Publicity

By participating in this Competition, each member of the Student Team consents to the use, publication, reproduction and for all purposes, including publicity, promotion and advertising, in any media (including without limitation, the Internet, television, or offline promotions), each winner's name, city, photograph, likeness, voice, image, and competition entry each in perpetuity without further compensation, payment of fees or royalties, credit or right of review or approval.

Student Teams further consent to the use of personal information about the Student Teams and individual members of such teams by HUD, the partnering housing authority divisions, and third parties acting on their behalf.

Limitation of Liability

By participating in this challenge, each individual agrees to assume any and all risks and waive claims against the Federal Government and its related entities, except in the case of willful misconduct, for any injury, death, damage, or loss of property, revenue, or profits, whether direct, indirect, or consequential, arising from participation in this prize challenge, whether the injury, death, damage, or loss arises through negligence or otherwise.

Based on the subject matter of the challenge, the type of work that it will possibly require, as well as an analysis of the likelihood of any claims for death, bodily injury, or property damage, or loss potentially resulting from challenge participation, individuals are not required to obtain liability insurance or demonstrate financial responsibility to participate in this challenge.

By participating in this competition, each individual agrees to indemnify the Federal Government against third party claims for damages arising from or related to challenge activities.

By participating in this competition, each member of the Student Team agrees to release and hold harmless HUD and the partnering housing authority divisions, advertising and promotional agencies, wholesalers and retailers, vendors, contractors, sub-contractors, and each of the foregoing entities' employees, officers, directors, shareholders, members and agents (collectively the "Released Parties"), from and against any and all claims, actions and/or liability for any injuries or death, loss or damage of any kind arising from or in connection with participation in and/or entry into the competition or acceptance, delivery, or use of any recognition, including without limitation, recognition of the finalists.

The Released Parties are not responsible or liable for any incorrect or inaccurate information, and assume no responsibility for (i) typographical or other errors in the printing of the promotional materials or the offering or announcement of recognition; (ii) any error, printing error, omission, interruption, defect or delay in operation or transmission at any website; (iii) failure of any entry to be received by HUD due to technical problems, printing error, human error or traffic congestion on the Internet or at any website; (iv) communications line, hardware and/or software failures; (v) damage to any computer (software or hardware) resulting from participation in the competition; (vi) theft or destruction of, tampering with, unauthorized access to, or alteration of entries and/or entry information; or (vi) entries that are late, lost, stolen, damaged, illegible and/or unintelligible (or any combination thereof).

General Conditions

All federal, state, and local laws and regulations apply.

HUD reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to cancel, terminate, modify or suspend this competition or any portion thereof, or to disqualify any individual, if for any reason: a) infection by computer virus, bugs, tampering, unauthorized intervention, actions by entrants, fraud, technical failures, or any other causes which, in HUD's sole opinion, corrupt or affect the administration, security, fairness, integrity or proper conduct of the competition; (b) the competition or any website associated therewith (or any portion thereof) becomes corrupted or does not allow the proper processing of entries; or (c) the competition is otherwise not capable of running as planned.