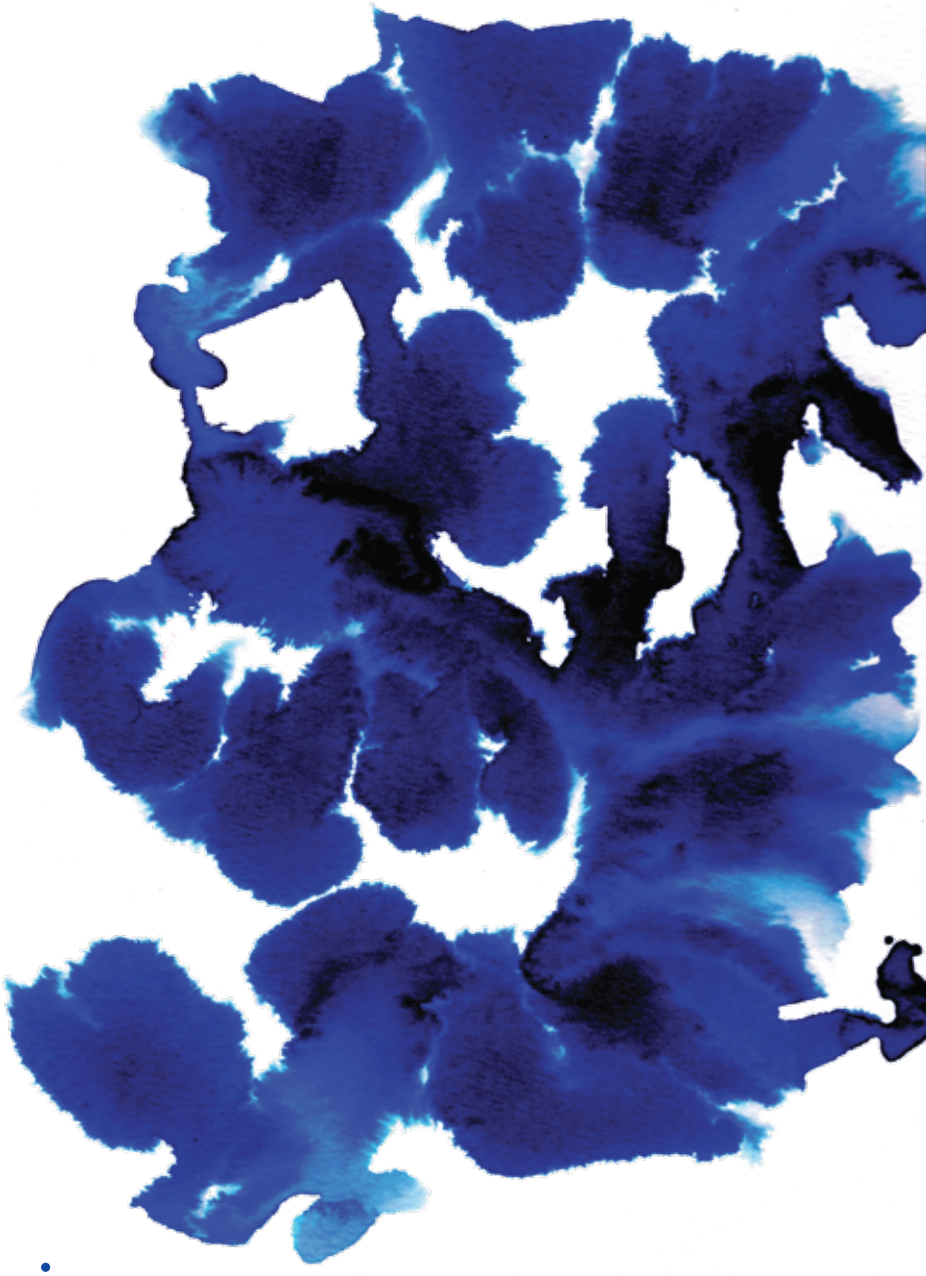

# Pan - American Award

BAQ 2026

BIENAL PANAMERICANA DE ARQUITECTURA DE QUITO

XXV EDICIÓN

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www.baq-cae.ec

CAE-P
COLEGIO DE ARQUITECTOS DEL ECUADOR
PICHINCHA

# COMPETITION BRIEF:
# Pan - American Award

## 1. BAKGROUND INFORMATION

The College of Architects of Ecuador – Pichincha Province (CAE-P), within the framework of the XXV Pan-American Architecture Biennale of Quito (BAQ XXV), invites participation in the Biennale Award for Playful-Educational Pavilion Design, the central axis of the curatorial project "DO NOT NOT TOUCH"

This is conceived as a platform for confronting contemporary architectural production. The three axes operate in a parallel and complementary way, fulfilling their particular objectives.

## QUITO´S 2026 ARCHITECTURE BIENNALE : DO NOT NOT TOUCH

Twenty-five editions of the Quito's Architecture Biennale. Nearly half a century celebrating architecture while the world we inhabit fractures, accelerates, and forgets to feel. And here we are, once again, facing our works, our words, our doubts and our questions:

Who does architecture touch today?
At what point did we begin to admire images more than places, words more than spaces, form more than the emotion it provokes?
At what moment did we stop feeling pride in being architects because we stopped touching what made us become architects?

BAQ XXV is a shake-up of the present. It is a biennale that does not kneel before its history, but rather touches it with open hands, to feel what remains alive, to recognize what no longer vibrates, to have the certainty that architecture is not dispensable.

For decades, architecture has moved within this form of indifferent control, within these limits of display cases, regulations and discourses. And in this quest for control, we began to live behind an invisible sign:

DO NOT TOUCH.

A sign that repeats itself in museums, in classrooms, and in cities.
A sign that protects but at the same time isolates.
That claims to care but at the same time separates.
That seeks to preserve but at the same time destroys connections.
That distances us from risk, from error, and from experience.
We were forbidden to touch long ago, and we obeyed.

Thus, little by little, the profession became only image, discourse and abstraction.

Matter ceased to be touched.
Space stopped learning from the body that moves.
Places stopped inviting us to feel and to feel part of something.

DO NOT TOUCH was a warning that taught us to speak of life without living it, to theorize matter without touching it.

It turned us into spectators

of our own profession.
It accustomed us to looking at models, renderings and discourses as if they were sufficient to construct reality.
It domesticated us in the correctness of fear and robbed us of risk.

That is why this biennale inverts the slogan and declares, with responsibility and with rebellion:

**DO NOT NOT TOUCH.**

Touch with hands, with the senses, with the heart and with emotion.
Touch to feel what is human, what is fragile, what is alive.
Touch to learn again what distance made us forget.

This biennale raises its voice against that anesthesia.

Against architecture that no longer hurts, that no longer moves, that no longer risks.
Against academia that rewards obedience more than imagination.
Against criticism that confuses depth with jargon.
Against the profession that forgets that the architect's first tool was not the ruler, but the hand.

To touch, today, is an act that seems rebellious, when it was always part of our human and animal nature. It is to refuse to accept architecture without body, without soul, without heart.

In a world that tells us "do not touch," this biennale responds:

**DO NOT NOT TOUCH.**

Because touching is the verb of trust.

Trust that architecture can still provoke emotions, change perspective and transform life.
Trust that the profession remains necessary.

Because only when we touch again, with our hands, with our senses, with our hearts and with our emotions, will we feel pride, hope and faith in architecture again and remember the reason why we chose to be architects.

## BIENNALE AWARD: TOUCHING TO TRANSFORM

The final "do not touch" is not in the city or in the classroom. It is within architecture itself.

In the fear of looking directly at what we have turned into routine.
In the habit of repeating words, styles and arguments until they are emptied of meaning.

For too long, architecture has protected itself behind its own language.

It has taken refuge in discourse, in posture, in the postcard.
It has confused thought with rhetoric, rigor with coldness, beauty with cosmetic patches.

We have become accustomed to rewarding what seems intelligent and interesting, without asking ourselves if it still touches something real or only serves for folklorism and the exotic gaze.

# COMPETITION BRIEF:
## Pan - American Award

The Biennale Award, the historic core of the biennale, assumes here an uncomfortable and necessary task: to break aesthetic indifference and touch the truth of the profession.

This biennale will not reward cliches disguised as concepts or rhetoric that spins in the void.

> It will not celebrate architecture that is better contemplated on a screen than in the territory where it exists.
> It will not reward perfect photographs that freeze an emotion that never occurred.
> Nor works that confuse silence with emptiness, abstraction with disconnection, solemnity with meaning.

Architecture is an experience that is lived, touched and remembered. And this biennale does not seek arguments that shine, but works that are felt. Works that do not need theoretical defenses because their presence is enough.

To touch the discipline is to touch its wound. That wound left by the excess of words, the excess of ego, the excess of filters. Because every time architecture becomes image or slogan, it loses a layer of humanity.

## BIENNALE AWARD AT THE XXV PAN-AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE BIENNALE OF QUITO BAQ2026

The XXV QUITO ARCHITECTURE BIENNALE – DO NOT NOT TOUCH understands the competition not as a runway or platform, but as an honest confrontation. The works that will be recognized will be those that provoke emotion, connection, permanence.

> Those that do not need to shout to be heard.
> Those that, in silence, touch what is most sensitive in us.

The Biennale Award will be, this time, an act of collective sincerity. Celebrating architecture does not mean rewarding its surface, but revealing its depth. Therefore, the essential criterion of this biennale will be its capacity to truly touch us.

This biennale does not fear discomfort. It wants the discipline to look at itself in the mirror without filters, without awards that anesthetize, without rhetoric that distracts.

Because what is at stake here is not the vanity of a guild, but the possibility that architecture will have a soul again. And there is only one way to achieve it: Do not not touch what hurts us.

> Do not not touch what moves us.
> Do not not touch what makes us believe again and feel proud of our profession.

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## 1. PAN-AMERICAN AWARD

The Pan-American Award of the Pan-American Architecture Biennale of Quito is an open call for built projects throughout the American continent during the years 2022-2026, prior to the BAQ2026 Biennale event.

In this edition, the Pan-American Award has the following participation categories:

1. Single-family housing
2. Multi-family housing
3. Public facilities
4. Administrative, institutional and corporate buildings
5. Intervention in heritage or heritage-interest architecture
6. Intervention in non-heritage architecture
7. Public and/or collective space

## 2. CATEGORIES

### SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING

Architectural works for single-family housing of any scale may participate.

### MULTI-UNIT HOUSING

Architectural works for multi-family housing, housing complexes and high-rise buildings may participate, which may incorporate other uses, provided that their primary use is residential.

### PUBLIC FACILITIES

Architectural works for public and/or private facilities may participate. They may combine other uses, provided that their primary use is one or several of the following:

Facilites for:

- Commerce
- Worship
- Culture
- Sports
- Education
- Lodging
- Industry
- Recreation
- Healthcare
- Tourism
- Transportation
- Other

### ADMINISTRATIVE, INSTITUTIONAL AND CORPORATE BUILDINGS

Architectural works for administrative, institutional and corporate use may participate. Other uses may be incorporated, provided that the primary use is administrative, institutional or corporate.

### SMALL SCALE

Small-scale architecture of any typology or use may participate, as well as experimental projects or those that, due to their characteristics, cannot be included in the other described categories.

Habitable projects up to a maximum of 90 m² may participate. Ephemeral projects or furniture pieces cannot compete. In the case of Housing, to participate within this category it must have a maximum area of 36 m².

**NOTE:** This sub-category is not part of the Grand Biennale Award.

### INTERVENTION IN HERITAGE OR HERITAGE-INTEREST ARCHITECTURE

Architectural interventions of any typology or use that enhance heritage or heritage-interest buildings may participate, whose condition must be

duly justified.

These may include:

- Restorations
- Rehabilitation
- Renovations

**IINTERVENTION IN NON-HERITAGE ARCHITECTURE**
Architectural interventions that enhance non-heritage buildings of any typology or use may participate.

These may include:

Pueden ser:
- Rehabilitation
- Renovations

**PUBLIC AND/OR COLLECTIVE SPACE**
Interventions executed in public or collective space in urban, natural or heritage contexts may participate.

## 3. ENTRY CONDITIONS

- Projects built in Ecuador.
- Projects built during the period from 2022 to 2026.
- Projects that have NOT received recognition (been awarded or selected) in previous editions of BAQ.
- Built projects that comply with the legal regulations of each jurisdiction.
- Projects completed in their entirety.

## 4. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

- Projects may be submitted by architects, urban planners and/or developers, at the Pan-American level, who are legally authorized and practice their profession publicly or privately.
- Only payment validates the registration process.
- All submission elements must be complete and comply with each of the required formats.

## 5. REGISTRATION PROCESS

**1.** The project must be registered on the BAQ2026 registration platform:

https://concurso.baqcae.ec/product/inscripcion-a-concurso-paraprofesionales/

**2.** Complete the fields with the basic project information:

- Award
- Category
- Project Name
- Country
- City
- Registrant's details

**3.** Complete billing information.

**4.** Payment can be made up to 6 days after completing the registration.

**5.** Once payment is made and approved, a username and password will be sent to the registered email address.

**6.** At the following link:

https://proyectos.baq-cae.ec/login
Enter the username and password sent to the email to upload the information.

**7.** In the Author, Studio and/or Developer and collaborators field, information must be accurate. (The information provided on the platform will be what BAQ uses afterward to recognize credits).

- This information will be used as follows: in the case of finalists and winners, the information of Author(s) and Collaborator(s) will be placed on the Pan-American Architecture platform and in the BAQ2026 Competition Winners Book.
- In the case of participants, the information of Author(s) and Collaborator(s) will be placed on the Pan-American Architecture platform, while in the participants' catalogs of the BAQ2026 Competition Winners Book, the information of Author(s) will be placed.
- For social media dissemination segments, the information of Author(s) will be used in both cases.

**8.** All fields must be completed with the minimum required information.

**9.** Save the uploaded information.

**NOTE:** Any changes to the submission elements can be made until the date and time stipulated for the competition closing.

## 6. RESTRICTIONS

The following persons are not eligible to participate:

- Members of the BAQ 2026 team.
- Members of the Biennale Award 2026 Jury.
- Members of the Biennale Award 2026 Jury Secretariat.
- Members of the Biennale Award 2026 Logistics Secretariat.
- Those serving as President and Vice President of CAE-P.

## 7. SUBMISSION REMARKS

BAQ is not responsible for inaccuracies or errors in the data with which registration is made, and the same work cannot be registered by more than one participant.

In case of conflict between authors and/or developers:

**1.** The BAQ organization will not participate in the resolution.

**2.** If no agreement is reached between the parties, registrations will be nullified at any stage of the process, losing the right to refund of the registration fee.

If the BAQ team detects any type of omission of authorship information in projects involving a conflict of interest in any winning, finalist or participant project, BAQ will proceed to remove the award and the project from its participant database, at any time the case arises, losing the right to refund of the registration fee.

In case of any conflict between Authors, designers and/or developers of any nature and at any stage of the process, even after the BAQ has concluded, the organization will not participate in the resolution.

## 8. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

### BOARD

- Digital file, 3 A1 boards (59.5 cm x 84.1 cm), horizontal orientation, PDF format.
- Download the board template from the BAQ website, which cannot be modified.
- Place the flag of the country of origin of the work in the indicated space.
- Maximum size of the three files: 100 MB.

The content and graphic quality of the boards are the participant's responsibility.

The Biennale Commission recommends saving the document in high quality print.

Participating projects that do not comply with the established format will be automatically disqualified.

Participants are requested to follow the board content instructions, as the Biennale may choose the arrangement and total or partial use of them for the exhibition.

### DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

- Project description in a maximum of 500 words.
- In case of heritage or heritage - interest buildings, this condition must be duly justified.

### COVER PHOTOGRAPHS

- Photographs that best represent the project:
- 2 selected photographs of the project: 1 horizontal and 1 vertical.
- JPEG image format, 300 dpi resolution (minimum side 20 cm).
- Maximum size: 6 MB each.

### PHOTOGRAPHS

- 8 to 12 photos.
- JPEG format, 300 dpi resolution (minimum side 15 cm).
- Maximum size: 6 MB each.
- In case of heritage or heritage - interest buildings: photos showing the building before and after the intervention.

### DRAWINGS

- Maximum 8 drawings: site plan, floor plans, elevations, sections, diagrams, among others, with graphic scale.
- Each drawing must be a separate file.
- JPEG format, 300 dpi resolution (minimum side 15 cm).
- Maximum size: 6 MB each.

### VIDEO

- One short video of the work, maximum 55 seconds, in MP4 format.
- May contain background music and content must be focused on the documentation of the work.
- Must not contain scenes of explanation of the work by the authors.
- Place the video link on the registration platform (this link must be open without expiration time or access passwords).

## 9. USE OF INFORMATION

All requested material (including images, drawings, boards, statement, etc.) submitted by participants will become part of the BAQ archive.

No monetary value will be recognized for patrimonial and reproduction rights of photographs by including

them in exhibitions and/or publications.

This documentation will be sent to the jury team as judging material.

In addition, it will become part of the Competition exhibition within the framework of Biennale Week.

The exhibition of participants and winners will be carried out with total or partial material sent, according to the curatorship and museography designed by the commission of the XXV Quito Architecture Biennale, BAQ2026.

All participating projects and publications will be exhibited.

Once the Biennale is concluded, the information will become part of the digital repository Pan - American Architecture Archive and also the BAQ2026 Winners Book.

The information will be preserved by BAQ as a record of participation in the competition for this edition.

## 10. SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process will be divided into two stages:

**Stage 1:** The best works and publications will be selected as finalists in each category and will proceed to the second judging stage.

**Stage 2:** Winners of each category will be chosen from the previous group of finalists. From the Group of Winners, the the winner of the GRAND BIENNALE AWARD will be chosen.

## 11. AWARDS

**Finalists:** will be recognized as the selection of the best projects and publications of the American continent and will receive:

- Finalist diploma
- Publication in the BAQ 2026 Book.
- Publication as finalist in the BAQ Archive:

www.arquitecturapanamericana.com

- Dissemination as finalists at national and international level.

**Winners:** the award for winning projects will consist of:

- Recognition statuette
- Winner diploma
- Publication in the BAQ 2026 Book
- Publication as winners in the BAQ Archive:
www.arquitecturapanamericana.com
- Dissemination as winners at national and international level

## 12. JURY

The College of Architects of Ecuador – Pichincha Province reserves the exclusive right to select the jury members.

This selection will be made in consideration of their experience and recognition in the field of Architecture in general and, in particular, in relation to the various categories.

The jury's decisions are final and binding.

All available awards for each category must be awarded, unless in exceptional cases, which the jury must mandatorily justify.

## 13. JUDGING PROCESS

Each jury team will carry out the respective curation of participating projects, based on the principles of good architectural practice, where the integrity of the work in composition, design and aesthetics is evident, its response to site, context and materiality, its social and environmental responsibility, and finally its influence over time.

BAQ will not provide an evaluation rubric; however, emphasis is placed on the recognition of virtuous, problem - solving, innovative architecture with a comprehensive vision.

## 14. ENTRY FEES

The indicated price plus taxes:

- **Launch (40% discount)**
International: USD 135
Regular: USD 108
CAE-P Members in good standing -25%: USD 81

- **Early Registration (20% discount)**
International: USD 180
Regular: USD 144
CAE-P Members in good standing -25%: USD 108

- **Until Registration Closing**
International: USD 225
Regular: USD 180
CAE-P Members in good standing -25%: USD 135

## 15. IMPORTANT DATES

- **Launch:** January 22 to February 27, 2026.
- **Early Registration:** February 28 to April 30, 2026.
- **Registration Closing:** May 1 to October 30, 2026.

- **Information Submission Deadline:** October 30 until 11:59 PM (GMT-5).
- **Presentation of Finalist Projects and Publications:** November 2026.
- **Announcement of Winning Projects and Publications:** November 2026.