

Ehécatl

THE 8TH FÉLIX CANDELA AWARD

Viajero: has llegado a la región más transparente del aire.
Alfonso Reyes

¡Academia no! ¡Academia no!
Le Corbusier

La mejor arquitectura es la que no tiene autor, la que es impersonal, una canoa, una bicicleta, un bote de remos... la que no tiene autor"
Sáenz de Oíza

"Estamos en derrota, nunca en doma"
Claudio Rodríguez

What if we simply declare that there is no crisis; that is, what if we redefine our relationship with the city not as its creators, but as its mere subjects, as its supporters?
Rem Koolhaas

Organiza

IESARQ

Ehécatl

The 8th Félix Candela Award

The Félix Candela Award is an international competition for architectural ideas in Spanish, consisting of two phases. It is organized annually by the Instituto Español de Arquitectura (IESARQ) and is open to all students of architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning, and design, as well as young architects, landscape architects, urban planners, and designers, either individually or in teams of two or three members.

What if Mexico City could not expand any further; what if it had to shrink? This edition of the Félix Candela Award raises several questions concerning the growth and evolution of the American city, specifically, for all participants, the case of Mexico City, one of the largest metropolises in America, throughout its history. It also consists of a reflection on the limits of property and its use, both above and below ground; fundamentally, those established by law, but focused not on the limits of speculative vertical development, but on the social conquest of air as a right, above and beyond the former. At the same time, it provides an opportunity to think in an executive manner about the real degrowth of our cities, in this case Mexico City, the vacancy of land, and the conquest of air as a desire, a right, and an opportunity. The conceptual axis of symmetry for this exercise could be set at the variable height strip that would determine the ground and the horizon, where the current city extends to the limits of our rational capacity to imagine it organized and, based on the participants' proposal, converted into a free and continuous strip, permeable and fundamentally pedestrianized for citizens to encounter the nature of the ground.

Can we grow in volume rather than surface area? Yes, indeed, and grow faster and better, cubically, while decreasing or reducing (in some cases eradicating) everything that affects our cities (what we used to know as cities, in the words of Rem Koolhaas) by a third or more. Of course, the equation that results from this type of city is third degree, with special attention to variable Z, which is the condition of the air at the thermodynamic level.

Participants in the eighth edition of the Félix Candela Award will have to take a stance, justify it, and propose a model for a city built at height or superimposed on the existing city, allowing for the reduction of the corresponding part of the city and its recovery as vacant land for social purposes, considerably increasing housing density to the limit that the participant considers appropriate in relation to their principles, with the simple gesture of conquering the air, taking advantage of the current property limits set by urban planning laws and turning the public entity into an urban developer of the air, in favor of the city.

... el que lee mucho y anda mucho ve mucho y sabe mucho

Miguel de Cervantes

Project

Ehécatl calls for the conception of the aerial city: an elevated urban environment that allows the ground to be returned to everyday life, articulates urban degrowth in a fair manner, and explores the thermodynamics of the city as an energy system.

To this end, participants in the eighth edition of the Félix Candela Prize will choose a section of the city large enough to allow them to test a type of aerial city—above the existing city, not necessarily an unoccupied area, quite the contrary—and, in any case, no smaller than 10 hectares in area. Participants' proposals must be explained, based on a Master Plan, through a Master Section that identifies the superstructure, structure, and infrastructure of this super city in the air, as well as the typical housing units, both private and collective, at the domestic and city levels. The general program of this superimposed, elevated, or floating fragment of the city, suspended

in the air above the existing city, will include, on a domestic scale, at the cellular level, the opportunity for housing and the definition of an ideal American type, to the core; on a collective scale, the reformulation of public space, recreation, celebration, and connectivity. The superstructure, structure, and infrastructure are key in the formulation of the project to support the previous life, private or in relation, of those who will have thus conquered the air.

The degree of definition will be such that the proposal, through the various graphic documents and very little text, can be presented on three DIN A1 panels.

All participants are asked to work on their proposal in one or more physical models and to use these to narrate their proposal, in the manner they deem best, across the three panels.

At the same time, participants will submit a DIN A3-size PDF dossier with all the documentation of the design process, as confidence in the process always leads to discovery, fueled by readings and visions that accompany the path of those who came before, throughout the duration of the competition.

Criteria

The originality of the proposal will be evaluated, as well as the quality of the graphic expression, the accuracy in the representation of the different documents that express the proposal, and the coherence between the ideas and what is represented, in relation to the proposed theme and its relationship with the most important philosophical theories and trends related to the theme of the competition. In particular, spatial, environmental, and social strategies consistent with the conceptual framework will be evaluated: structural lightness, energy efficiency, wind ventilation, natural lighting, accessibility, mixed uses, biodiversity, and quality of public airspace. Proposals must be unpublished and original. The detection of plagiarism, substantial reuse, or previous presentation/award in another competition or contest will result in automatic disqualification; if proven after the decision, the award will be withdrawn and the corresponding results will be invalidated.

First phase

The finalists whose proposals are selected will move on to a second phase, where they will take part in an intensive project workshop to compete for the “FÉLIX CANDELA” Award. The theme and scope of the workshop will be communicated to the finalists when the results of this first phase are announced.

Second phase

The finalists will participate in the intensive project workshop, forming teams with one of the renowned architects selected by IESARQ to ensure the best possible use of the workshop. Based on the work carried out in the workshop, each of the finalists will present the final result to the jury to compete for the “FÉLIX CANDELA” Award.

Language

The language of the contest is Spanish. Therefore, any text on the panels must be translated into Spanish if this is not the participants' native language.

Participants

All architecture, design, and urban planning students enrolled in any academic institution and/or university offering courses in design, architecture, and urban planning may participate in this contest, either individually or in teams of up to three people. Likewise, all young architects up to the age of 40 on the closing date of registration may participate in this contest. The representative of each team must be an architect or architecture student with a generalist background or specializing in one of these areas and may form a team with other professionals or students from related fields such as design, civil engineering, urban planning, etc. Likewise, they may participate in a team with any of the above philosophers, theologians, physicists, historians, doctors, anthropologists, political scientists, or any other relevant profile in relation to the specific theme of this edition and, in any case, at the discretion of the participant who appears as the head or representative of each team.

The above conditions must be verified by each participant by providing a copy of an official identification document proving their place of birth and/or residence, as well as a copy of a document certifying their age and student status or professional qualification, where applicable. Only one proposal may be submitted per registration. Each contestant or participating team may submit only one project, which will be assigned a REGISTRATION NUMBER. Under no circumstances may any member of a team be part of another team. No member of the jury, regular collaborating partners, employees, or relatives up to the second degree of kinship with them may enter the competition. Failure to comply with any of these conditions will result in the disqualification of the contestant or team in question.

At the discretion of each team, they may or may not have one or more advisors, who will be listed on their registration form and who, if the proposal is successful, will be given the corresponding credit and recognition by IESARQ.

In any case, advisors must be over 40 years of age and have a verifiable academic, research, or professional background. The documentation proving the legal participation of each participant must be verified at the time of submitting their proposal.

Calendar and deadlines

START OF THE CONTEST

September 18, 2025

REGISTRATION PERIOD 1

September 18 to November 20, 2025

JURY ANNOUNCEMENT

November 15, 2025

END OF CONSULTATION PERIOD

November 15, 2025

PUBLICATION FAQ

November 18, 2025

REGISTRATION PERIOD 2

November 21, 2025, to March 10, 2026

REGISTRATION PERIOD 3

March 11 to June 30, 2026

REGISTRATION CLOSING DATE

June 30, 2026

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PHASE 1

Until June 30, 2026

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FINALISTS

August 2026

WORKSHOP DEVELOPMENT PHASE 2

Starting in August 2026

Registration

The registration period begins on September 18, 2025, and ends on June 30, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. in Mexico City (Central American Time (CET) = UTC/GMT - 6:00).

The following registration fees are established according to the date on which the contestant registers:

REGISTRATION PERIOD 1

(September 18, 2025 to November 20, 2025) \$1800 MXN

REGISTRATION PERIOD 2

(November 21, 2025 to March 10, 2026): \$2400 MXN

REGISTRATION PERIOD 3

(March 11, 2026 to June 30, 2026): \$3000 MXN

Payment can be made using any of the following methods:

PAYPAL via the website www.premiofelixcandela.mx/registro

Deposit or bank transfer:

BENEFICIARY	INSTITUTO ESPAÑOL DE ARQUITECTURA
BANK	BBVA BANCOMER
ACCOUNT NUMBER	01 1114 8729
CLABE	01 2180 0011 1148 7296
SWIFT CODE	BCMRMXMM

In all cases, documentation proving payment via PayPal or proof of deposit/bank transfer certifying the corresponding payment must be sent to the following email address: secretaria@premiofelixcandela.mx

As soon as payment has been verified, IESARQ will send an email confirming registration for the contest and indicating the assigned registration number. Without verification of payment of the registration fee, the preliminary registration application will be invalid and the contestant must submit a new one if they wish to participate.

*PayPal fees, issuing bank fees, or bank transfer costs are not included in the registration price.

The interested party will have to bear these costs.

**Any registration that has not been formalized under these terms will not be valid.

***Payment and registration is per team only.

Questions

All questions regarding registration, registration numbers, or any issues related to fees, payments, or money transfers will be answered throughout the registration period at the email address secretaria@premiofelixcandela.mx.

Submission of proposals

Proposals will be received digitally at the following address: secretaria@premiofelixcandela.mx

A ZIP or RAR file will be sent with the registration number as its name (for example: 08PFC1234.zip), which will include the JPG images corresponding to the panels and the documentation proving the legal participation of the contestants. The deadline for submitting proposals is June 30, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. in Mexico City (Central American Time (CET) = UTC/GMT - 6:00).

Documentation

This will consist of the delivery of 3 digital panels in JPG format with the following characteristics:

- Digital image format: JPG.
- Color mode: RGB
- Minimum resolution: 150 dpi.
- File name: registration number (e.g., 08PFC1234)
- Maximum file size per panel: 15 MB.
- Dimensions: rectangular format in vertical position, to be printed in DIN A1 size (59.4 x 84.0 cm).

These panels shall include all the graphic and written information deemed necessary by the participants for the proper definition of the proposal. Consideration shall be given both to the resolution of the panels and to the size of the texts, which may eventually be printed on DIN A1 paper (59.4 x 84.0 cm) in vertical format. The panels will therefore be read vertically, but it is left to the discretion of the participants to treat the panels as a single panel with a length equal to the sum of the short dimension of the panel in the vertical direction, for the purpose of composing the content on them. Taking these parameters into account, the minimum font size for the texts included on the panels must be 10 points. The text included on the panels shall not exceed 300 words in Spanish, not including labels. Any technique or form of graphic expression that clearly and accurately explains the proposal will be accepted. No documentation other than that mentioned above may be submitted. No brand, logo, insignia, or any other element that could identify the author may be included, except for the registration number. On the sheets, the registration number must appear in the lower right corner of each panel.

Participants will submit a dossier in DIN A3 format (29.7 x 42 cm) in PDF format with all the documentation related to the design process.

Jury

The jury will be officially published on the Félix Candela Award website (www.premiofelixcandela.mx) and disseminated through IESARQ's social media channels.

Awards

First phase

Eight finalist teams will be selected.

These will participate in the project workshops in the second phase.

- Selection of a package of architecture books and magazines.
- Certificate of recognition.

Second phase

FIRST PRIZE

The winning team will be awarded the “FELIX CANDELA” prize, which consists of:

- A commemorative medal and certificate of recognition for the team members.
- MXN 90,000.00 NINETY THOUSAND MEXICAN PESOS to be distributed among all team members.

SECOND PRIZE

- Commemorative medal and certificate of recognition for team members.
- MXN 40,000.00 FORTY THOUSAND MEXICAN PESOS to be distributed among all team members.

THIRD PRIZE

- Commemorative medal and certificate of recognition for team members.
- MXN 25,000.00 TWENTY FIVE THOUSAND MEXICAN PESOS to be distributed among all team members.

The Jury may award Honorable Mentions to as many projects as it deems worthy of such distinction. Mentions are without financial remuneration.

*The prizes will be paid by bank transfer to the account indicated by the representative of the winning team. The cash prizes will be subject to the applicable tax withholdings. Said payment will be made within a period not exceeding 90 calendar days from the date of the Jury's decision.

Exhibition and intellectual property rights

Once the competition has been decided, the finalists' works and a selection, at the discretion of the jury, will be published on the Félix Candela Award website and disseminated through IESARQ's media channels.

IESARQ may also organize an exhibition open to the public with the finalist proposals and a selection made for this purpose by the Award Jury. If such an exhibition is held, it will be announced to all participants, regardless of whether their proposals have been selected.

Intellectual property rights: contestants will transfer to IESARQ only the exploitation rights corresponding to the purpose of advertising the Contest and its results, such as the publication and exhibition of the works submitted and selected by the Jury, although those contestants who have not won a prize and who have requested anonymity will remain anonymous.

In the case of the winning proposals, the financial amount of the prizes will be taken as payment for the preliminary project and will become the property of IESARQ.

Participation and registration in the Contest therefore implies acceptance of the above conditions.

Once registration has been completed, the registration fee will not be refunded. The Jury, by majority vote, is the only body authorized and responsible for the final selection of the winner of this contest, and its decision shall be final.

Proposals must be unpublished and the work of the entrant. Detection of plagiarism, substantial reuse, or Entries must be unpublished and original works. The detection of plagiarism, substantial reuse, or previous submission/award in another contest or competition will result in automatic disqualification; if proven after the decision, the award will be withdrawn and the corresponding results will be invalidated.

IESARQ reserves the right to make any improvements to the Rules (dates, deadlines, requirements, or other) in the event of any exceptional circumstances and, provided that it is in the service of the common good of the participants and the best development of this contest.

As participants accept the final decisions of the Jury upon registration, both IESARQ and the members of the Jury are exempt from any possible civil or criminal claims in the event that any architect or team of architects disagrees with the final decision.

