MEDIA ARCHITECTURE BIENNALE
#FUTURES IMPLIED

Call for Student Awards: MAB20 – *Futures Implied*

Online | 28 June - 2 July, 2021

The Media Architecture Biennale 20 (MAB20) themed #FuturesImplied - originally planned for the fall of 2020 - will take place on **June 28th - July 2nd, 2021.** Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the MAB20 will be held in an **online format** with a combination of internationally accessible online events and smaller scale, on-site meet-ups in Amsterdam and Utrecht.

The Media Architecture Biennale 2020 (MAB20) invites students to send in their projects for the **MAB Student Awards**. An internationally acclaimed jury will select nominees and winners in five categories. A selection of projects will also be presented in an online exhibition to be displayed on the MAB Student Awards website. Nominees and awards will be presented in an **online livecast during MAB20**. We especially encourage submissions that address the Biennale's theme of *Futures Implied* and demonstrate the implications of media technologies for urban development, the design of our public spaces, and the well-being of the ecosystem at large.

Important Dates

Submissions open: **1 October 2020**
Submissions close: **1 April 2021**
Selections announced: **22 April 2021**
MAB Student Awards Livecast: **To be announced (28 June - 2 July)**

To register and submit your projects at **CLICK HERE**.

MAB Theme #Futures Implied

Our cities and daily life are increasingly shaped by the emergence of digital technologies such as digital platforms, geolocated services and online maps, sensor technology, Internet of Things, responsive technologies as well as surveillance systems. None of these technologies brought into the city are neutral enablers, mere decorative structures or just simple marketplaces connecting demand and supply in fields as diverse as energy and transport to commerce and leisure. They are built upon numerous spoken and unspoken assumptions about urban life, each with their own implications for both social relations as well as their effect on the natural ecosystem. It is time therefore for the discipline of media architecture to address the implied futures of new technologies.

We are thus witnessing an unprecedented and multifaceted transformation that is not only changing the way in which cities are designed and managed but also the way in which we as humans behave, communicate and connect with each other and our environment. This emerging spectrum of interactive technologies often appears in the form of top-down smart city solutions aiming to optimize flows, efficiency, and safety. The introduction of these technologies often compromises public values; they may interfere with citizen's rights or be detrimental to the ecosystem. This might, in the long run, set the ground for techno-deterministic dystopian futures. It is time therefore to 'leap' into the future and further explore the possible outcomes, paths and challenges of the technologization of cities and its implied futures.

Embracing the spectrum between innovation and critical thinking, speculation and pragmatism, the student awards aim to spark and materialize conversations on current and future urban paradigms. Projects can range from speculative future visions to concrete solutions aiming to showcase innovative ideas or uncover potential pitfalls of urban transformation. They can take a wide spectrum of formats and shapes: from responsive public spaces, urban screens, media facades, media kiosks and displays, to digitally mediated urban games, media art installations, local community platforms, mapping and navigation tools, as well as technologies that monitor, construct, design, manage and structure the use of urban resources.

The student awards, being an experimental space, encourages a critical as well as a constructive approach to the above themes. The following open questions aim to kick-start a discussion oscillating between utopia and dystopia, speculation and pragmatism.

Is technology made to support social structures and circular urban systems or leading to an increase in consumption as well as a waste of resources?

Does it enable a balanced interaction of humans and their environment or does it lead to uncontrolled development and exploitation of scarce resources?

Can these technologies activate and recreate public places for communities or are they more likely to generate passive spaces that come alive only in the digital sphere?

Could online participation lead to more inclusive engagement in cities, or would it lead to tokenism in disguise guided by vested interests?

Practical

The exhibition is open to students and recent graduates from around the world. Students can enter individually or as a group who have collaborated on the project. The project should be the outcome of a course, internship, graduation project, extracurricular activity or other assignment/initiative <u>at an educational institution</u>, and is produced **after the 1st of January 2016**. Submission is free of charge.

The required submissions' material consist of a description of the project, and a maximum of 7 images. Submissions may also include a poster and/or video explaining or documenting the project in action, which is recommended - **but not required**.

Projects can be submitted in one or more of the five categories that relate to MAB20's main theme of Futures Implied. These categories are:

- **The Aesthetics and Poetics of Responsive Urban Spaces**
- **Citizen's Digital Rights in the Era of Platform Ecologies**
- **Playful & Artistic Civic Engagement**
- **Restorative Cities**
- **More-Than-Human Cities**

See the [curatorial statement](#) to learn more about these themes.

How to apply
To register and submit your projects at **[CLICK HERE](#)**.

Selection and presentation

The projects will be evaluated by an international jury and three nominees will be selected for each category.

All selected nominees will have their projects permanently showcased on the MAB [Student Awards website](#) and promoted via MAB20's social media channels.

Nominees will also be interviewed about their projects and featured as a series of articles on [KooZA/rch](#). This series will be published in May as a collaboration between MAB20 and KooZA/arch.

Aside from that, nominees will receive full access to the entire MAB20 Program for free, which will enable networking opportunities with industry professionals and academics from the field.

The awarded participants of each category, in addition to the above, will get access to exclusive networking sessions with MAB Chairs and/or members of the jury. Additionally, they will be invited to talk about their work during the MAB Student Awards online livecast.

About the Media Architecture Biennale

The **Media Architecture Biennale** is the world's premier event on media architecture, urban interaction design, and urban informatics. It brings together architects, artists and designers, leading thinkers on urban design, key industry and government representatives as well as community activists. Together, they explore the design and role of media in the built environment and its implications for urban communities and ecosystems.

The MAB20, originally planned for the fall of 2020, will take place on **June 28th – July 2nd, 2021** in an **online format**. All of the major events such as workshops, keynotes, awards and paper sessions will be accessible online from locations throughout the world. We still hope to be able to accompany these with some smaller scale, on-site meet-ups in Amsterdam and Utrecht, depending on Covid regulations at that time. Our goal is to ensure we provide an exciting and safe experience to the MAB-Community.

More information & Contact

MAB Student Awards Chairs

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The Media Architecture Biennale 20 is organized by the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences in collaboration with Utrecht University.

Executive Committee & General Chairs: Martijn de Waal, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences; Frank Suurenbroek, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences; Nanna Verhoeff, Utrecht University; and Michiel de Lange, Utrecht University. Program Chairs: Dave Colangelo, George Brown College Toronto; and Ava Fatah, Bartlett, University College London. www.mab20.org.