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MUSEUM of
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Design and Build Competition

2026

Soundscapes in Structure

**A National
Art, Architecture & Design Competition**

Seventh Annual

Design Brief Launches: September 24, 2025

Competition Portal Opens: October 23, 2025

Competition Closes April 26, 2026

[Competition Website](#)



Design and Build Competition Abstract

The Museum of Outdoor Arts (“MOA”), based in Greenwood Village, Colorado, announces its 7th Annual National Design and Build Competition, inviting undergraduate students, graduate students and interdisciplinary teams in art, architecture, landscape architecture, design, and related disciplines to submit conceptual design proposals. This year’s theme, “**Soundscapes in Structure**,” challenges participants to design a state-of-the-art amphitheater bandshell that merges acoustic excellence with bold visual identity. This competition represents the next evolution in MOA’s annual Design and Build Competition and challenges entrants to explore the intersection of architectural innovation and geometric harmony within the context of a live performance space.

Entrants must respond to the site’s unique conditions, designing for a wetland retention area within MOA’s sculpture park, Marjorie Park, that requires innovative structural solutions, while ensuring the amphitheater does not obstruct surrounding public sight lines. Proposals may incorporate principles of architecture, landscape design, and sculpture, as well as programmatic features such as lighting, projection, or other sensory enhancements. Designs must prioritize unique aesthetics, sustainability, accessibility, and feasibility within a project budget of \$500,000 U.S.D. Submissions should include conceptual drawings, narratives, and a physical scale model. Winning proposals will be recognized with cash prizes and archived by MOA, contributing to an ongoing dialogue about how architecture can act as both instrument and landmark in public cultural life.

Pre-Register your team for the competition by November 16, 2025.

Proposals are **due by no later than April 26, 2026. Early submissions are encouraged.**

MOA will award the top four entries with the following prize structure*:

1st place- \$10,000

2nd place- \$7,500

3rd place- \$5,000

Honorable Mention- \$1,500

*Prizes are divided evenly amongst all team members.

(I.e. \$5,000 each if two members win 1st place).

Winning submissions will be placed on the [MOA Design and Build Competition archive website](#).

Read further for full Competition Brief with complete entry details.

Visit the [competition website](#) to register your entry.

6855 S. Dayton Street #3368

Greenwood Village, CO 80155

303-806-0444



Design and Build **2025-26 Competition Brief**

Organization and Program Background

Museum of Outdoor Arts (MOA - Greenwood Village, Colorado)

The mission of MOA is to *make art a part of everyday life*.

Founded in 1981 by commercial real estate Developer, John W. Madden Jr., Marjorie Madden and their daughter, Cynthia Madden Leitner, **MOA** is an arts focused non-profit, private operating foundation, based in the Denver metro area. MOA offers a robust outdoor sculpture collection of over 85 pieces throughout the Englewood and Greenwood Village communities, maintains an indoor art collection, hosts student exhibitions, and provides multiple education programs. MOA also owns [Fiddler's Green Amphitheatre](#), which it operates in partnership with AEG Presents. More information can be found at www.moaonline.org.

***Design and Build* - Program Background**

The mission of *Design and Build* is to *motivate invention through collaborative creativity*.

Since 1991, MOA's [Design and Build](#) education program has provided an opportunity for emerging artists, students, and creative minds to express their creativity in collaborative art, architecture, and design projects. Since the inception of the program thousands of students have collaborated on a variety of projects. Participants find creative solutions to practical challenges as they master the skills to transform their creative ideas into finished pieces. There are several facets to the program including a summer internship, artist fellowship, collaborative outreach projects, alumni initiatives, and a national design competition.

***Design and Build* Competition**

After operating the *Design and Build* program for over 30 years in the Denver metro area, MOA has expanded *Design and Build* to include a national competition as part of the program. 2025-26 marks the seventh annual national art, architecture, & design competition. The goal of the competition is to cultivate potential from emerging artists, architecture, landscape architecture, and design students and to allow these creatives the space to conceptualize inventive ideas within a set of established parameters.

The competition garners an online repository of art, architecture, landscape architecture, and design concepts. The competition is based on an annual theme and/or challenge provided by MOA and cash prizes are awarded to the top four submissions. It is the goal to one day realize physical prototypes of the winning entries. For now, the competition is purely conceptual.

A Note to Educators about Key Learning Objectives and Benefits of Student Participation

Participating in the Design and Build (DB) Competition has several benefits for students, including the following learning outcomes:

- Developing critical thinking skills: The DB Competition requires participants to approach a problem creatively, which encourages critical thinking and problem-solving skills;
- Gaining real-world experience: The DB Competition provides students with the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical setting. This experience prepares students for their future careers;
- Building a portfolio: The DB Competition provides students with the opportunity to showcase their work and build portfolios that can be used when applying for jobs or further education;
- Networking: The DB Competition brings together professionals from different areas of the industry. This is an opportunity for students to network and potentially make connections that can help with future career opportunities;
- Building confidence: Participating in a competition can be a confidence booster for students. It can help them develop a sense of pride in their work and build their confidence in their abilities;
- Understanding the importance of design concepts and how to apply them: The DB Competition requires participants to create a design that meets specific criteria. This helps students understand the importance of design concepts and how to apply them in a real-world setting;
- Learning about collaboration: The DB Competition requires teamwork and collaboration. This helps students learn how to work effectively in a team and how to communicate effectively with others;
- Developing technical skills: The DB Competition often requires participants to use specific software or tools. This helps students develop technical skills that can be applied in future projects;
- Learning about project management: The DB Competition has deadlines and specific requirements. This helps students learn about project management and how to prioritize tasks to meet deadlines;
- Exposure and recognition: Winning or placing in a competition can provide participants with exposure and recognition. This can be particularly valuable for emerging designers who are looking to establish their reputation in the industry;
- Professional development: Participating in a competition can provide participants with a valuable opportunity for professional development. They can gain experience working on real-world design challenges, develop new skills and techniques, and learn from feedback and critiques from judges and other participants.
- Cash prizes or other rewards: The DB Competition offers cash prizes for the winners. These rewards provide participants with financial support and recognition for their work.

Overall, applying to a conceptual design competition can be a valuable experience for designers at all levels of experience. It can help them develop their skills, build their portfolios, and gain exposure and recognition in the industry. In addition, designing for public use can encourage contestants to create designs that are responsive to the needs of the general public, promote inclusivity and accessibility, and contribute to positive social change in the community.

Eligibility Requirements

The DB Competition is open to any undergraduate or graduate student currently enrolled in any U.S. university (recent graduates are eligible to enter for up to one year from competition open date, post graduation). Students should be studying in the field of art, architecture, landscape architecture, design, engineering, and/or other similar programs. Entries can be submitted by individuals or teams. **Additionally, instructors may choose to implement the competition into their curriculum.** Collaborative designs are highly desired. Previous year's competition winners and recent DB Summer Internship participants must observe a one-year waiting period before entering future competitions. Students must be US citizens in order to claim cash prizes, however this does not preclude non-US citizen students from participating.

Introduction of Theme:

“Soundscapes in Structure” refers to the intentional shaping of architectural form to influence how sound is experienced within and around a man-made environment. More than acoustics alone, it describes the fusion of structure, material, and spatial design to create an auditory environment that is as carefully composed as the visual one. In an amphitheater or band shell, the soundscape is not just about projecting music outward, it is about how sound resonates, reflects, and carries across the landscape, how it envelops an audience, and how it harmonizes with the natural surroundings. In this sense, a soundscape in structure transforms architecture into an instrument. Curves, surfaces, and voids do more than frame the stage, they sculpt the journey of sound, turning performance into an immersive, communal experience.

Some of the world's most beautiful band shells and open-air performance spaces are revered not only for their acoustics but also for the way they seem to rise organically from the landscapes around them. [The Wembley Soundshell](#) in London unfurls like a sweeping wave of steel and concrete, its graceful arc catching light and shadow as if the structure itself were resonating with music. At once monumental and fluid, it frames the stage as a sculptural horizon, blending engineering precision with an almost lyrical sense of rhythm and form. [The Chapel of Sound](#) in Beijing rises like a monolithic boulder cracked open to the sky, its stratified concrete layers echoing the rugged cliffs of the surrounding valley. Within, the cavernous chamber feels at once primal and celestial, where shifting light and cascading echoes transform the raw architecture into an instrument of nature itself.

[The Boulder Bandshell](#), with the Flatirons as its backdrop, transforms music into something elemental - songs drifting into the mountains, carried by crisp alpine air. At Tippet Rise Art Center in Montana, the sculptural [Inverted Portal](#) and other sound structures are both instruments and architecture, where wood, steel, and sky converge to shape resonance in surprising, intimate ways. These sites remind us that an amphitheater can be more than a stage; it can be a living dialogue between human creativity and the natural world. [Playa Vista](#) in California unfolds as a sleek coastal enclave where glass-and-steel modernism meets sunlit boulevards, softened by lush greenways and palm-lined promenades. The neighborhood feels like a curated balance of urban energy and Pacific ease, with shimmering architecture rising above breezy plazas and open-air gathering spaces.



The Challenge:

For the 2025-26 Design and Build Competition, MOA seeks conceptual designs for a site specific amphitheater bandshell in its sculpture park, Marjorie Park, that fuses state-of-the-art acoustics with a compelling and innovative visual identity. This year's theme, "**Soundscapes in Structure**," challenges entrants to imagine how architecture itself can function as an instrument, shaping resonance, carrying sound across open landscapes, and elevating the communal experience of live performance.

Design submissions must respond to the unique conditions of MOA's sculpture park, Marjorie Park, located in Greenwood Village, CO. The park contains a wetland retention area and the bandshell must be conceived for construction over marshy terrain and engineered to ensure stability while respecting the ecological character of the site. A further challenge is to create a structure that frames performances without overly impeding public sight lines across the park, balancing bold sculptural presence with sensitivity to the surrounding views.

Proposals may integrate principles of architecture, landscape architecture, sculpture, and design to create a performance space that is both visually striking and acoustically refined. Entrants are encouraged to explore programmatic enhancements such as integrated lighting, projection, shading, or site-responsive environmental features that expand the sensory impact of the performance experience. Submissions should also consider sustainability in materials and construction methods, prioritizing ecological responsibility and the use of durable or locally inspired materials.

The final concept should be functional, economically feasible, environmentally responsive, and inspiring in character - an iconic structure that enhances cultural programming while harmonizing with its setting.

All designs must be suitable for use by the public as a fully accessible performance venue. **Overall footprint dimensions cannot exceed 45 feet wide x 34 feet deep (1,530 SF).** Please reference site images in the Appendix section.



Budget:

Concepts should not exceed a budget of **\$500,000 U.S.D.** For the purposes of the DB Competition, please assume that the following costs are covered, and do NOT need to be accounted for in the final budget:

- Land acquisition;
- Permitting;
- Environmental assessments;
- Design, engineering, and drawing fees;
- Site preparation (assume a pristine, build ready site);
- Administrative and project management costs

Budgets **should include** the following categories:

- Foundation work;
 - Additional excavation that is not included in site preparation.
- Structural framework;
- Exterior finishes;
- Interior construction;
- Construction labor;
- Specialized equipment;
- Specialty features / technology / electrical systems;
- Landscaping / Hardscaping;
- Contingency



Collaboration:

The spirit of *Design and Build* has always been to solve problems and create through collaboration. Collaborative team projects are strongly encouraged and desired, however, all proposals must include narrative about how collaboration would be utilized in realizing the design (i.e. fabricators, engineers, and architects must work together to realize any design).

Prizes:

MOA will award the top four entries with the following prize structure*:

1st place- \$10,000

2nd place- \$7,500

3rd place- \$5,000

Honorable Mention- \$1,500

*If entered as a team, prize will be split evenly amongst team members
(i.e. If 1st place has 2 team members, each collaborator will receive \$5,000)

Winning submissions will be placed on the [MOA Design and Build Competition archive website](#).

Competition Review Panel:

A panel comprised of a team of industry subject matter expert(s), will evaluate submissions. While all entries will be submitted digitally, the top proposal teams will be invited to submit a pre-recorded virtual presentation of their submissions for the panel to review.

2025-26 Panelists:

This year's panelists are comprised of industry experts within the fields of design and architecture; the panelists will be announced in October, 2025.

Competition entries will be scored based on the following criteria. These criteria are worth up to 5 points each:

- Originality;
- Artistic/creative expression;
- Professionalism;
- Addressing the challenge;
- Technical proficiency;
- Safety;
- Final Presentation.

See items to include in your proposal and important dates on the following pages.

Items to Include in your Proposal:

Proposals should be submitted electronically via the registration website available at:
<https://moaonline.org/design-and-build-2026-competition/>

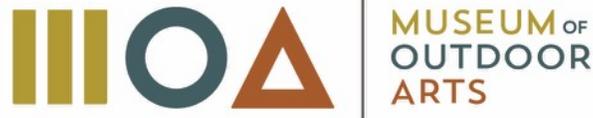
Your proposal MUST be submitted as **one multi-page PDF file**. The file size may not be larger than 50mb. **Files not in PDF format and multiple file submissions will be automatically disqualified!**

Your proposal MUST include all of the below items **in THIS order**. Incomplete proposals will be disqualified. All pages of proposals must be formatted for horizontal tabloid sized paper (11"x17").

- **Cover Page**
 - Project Image(s)
 - Project title
 - List all contestant names, year in schooling, major/program and affiliated university. Include email and phone number for each contestant.
 - In case of team/class entry, designate **one** team member to be the primary point of contact. Note your team's designated contact on the cover page.
- **Resume/CV and Biography** Tell us about your team. Include a resume/CV and brief biography for each team member. May not exceed one page per team member.
- **Site Selection**
 - Provide a site description and answer the following: What about the site inspired your design? What artistic or cultural references informed your decision? Do not exceed one page.
- **Project drawings/renderings/Documentation**
 - At least three but no more than five pages should be dedicated to drawings/renderings of proposed design. You may include as many images as you would like, but this section of your proposal must not exceed five pages of your proposal. At least one image MUST be an elevation view in the context of the selected site. Other drawings/renderings can include detail, cross section, site plan views and other renderings. *A weblink to digitally animated rendering(s) may also be included.
 - Documentation images of a physical model of the concept (Limit to no more than 5 images).
- **Project narrative.** Explain your concept by answering the below questions **in numbered order**. Limited to 3,000 words total.
 1. How does your design relate to the theme of **Soundscapes in Structure**?
 2. Describe the proposed materials, including required locally available materials, and methods used to build/install your structure/artwork/installation.
 3. Describe how your concept will be constructed? How long would construction take?
 4. How was collaboration utilized in realizing the design?
 5. How will your structure/installation be used by the public? How was safety addressed?
 6. How does the structure/artwork/installation address the climate in which it would reside?
 7. What type of technology is implemented in your design, if any?
 8. What makes the design environmentally friendly / sustainable?
 9. Open question: Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your proposal?
 10. Provide an estimated budget. (3,000 word limit does not apply to this requirement but the budget should be limited to one page.)

VI. Submission Instructions

- Please submit your entry via the competition registration form available at:
<https://moaonline.org/design-and-build-2026-competition/>



Competition Instructions in Summary:

- **Read the Design Brief thoroughly** and familiarize yourself with the proposal requirements;
- **Form a team and pre-register;**

Although, not a requirement to participate in the competition, pre-registration is a benefit, which allows us to reach out with helpful tips and resources along the way. You do not need to have your final team formed to pre-register. This simply lets us know that you are interested in participating in the competition. While team work is highly encouraged, individuals are also able to participate.

- **Brainstorm** your concept;
- **Create** your proposal, model and budget;
- You will need to **create a scale model** of your concept and document this photographically to include within your proposal;
Finalists may be asked to submit their physical model.
- **Adhere to the budget** requirement, not to exceed \$500,000 USD, and formulate budget;
- Make sure you have **followed directions** and included all items from the “Items to include in your proposal” page within the Design Brief;
- **Submit your proposal** as one combined PDF file with all required elements via the submission portal by no later than April 26, 2026 (11:59PM MST);

Please see our contact details on the following page and reach out with any questions along the way. Our competition resource guide and FAQ is also a very helpful tool to explore and is updated frequently throughout the competition. The guide will be available at the opening of the competition.



LEGAL DISCLAIMER

BY SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL TO THE MUSEUM OF OUTDOOR ARTS (“MOA”), YOU HEREBY ACKNOWLEDGE AND AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Exclusive License for Winning Proposals. If your proposal is selected as one of the top four (4) winning proposals, you grant to MOA an exclusive, worldwide, irrevocable, royalty-free license for a period of five (5) years to use, reproduce, modify, adapt, publish, distribute, publicly display, publicly perform, sublicense, and otherwise make use of the proposal in any form or medium now known or later developed, including without limitation physical construction or other real-world applications, in whole or in part. During such period, you shall not reproduce, distribute, or otherwise use the winning proposal outside of the Design and Build Program without the prior written consent of MOA.
2. Rights in All Submitted Proposals. For all proposals submitted, whether winning or non-winning, you grant to MOA a perpetual, worldwide, irrevocable, royalty-free, non-exclusive license to retain, archive, reproduce, adapt, publish, display, distribute, sublicense, and otherwise use the proposal, in whole or in part, for educational, archival, promotional, or marketing purposes, in any form or medium now known or later developed.
3. Real-World Construction and Derivative Works. You expressly acknowledge and agree that MOA shall have the unlimited right to use, adapt, modify, sublicense, and implement any winning proposal, in whole or in part, to construct, fabricate, or otherwise implement a real-world version of the design or any derivative thereof, without further approval, compensation, or attribution beyond what is stated herein.
4. Reservation of Rights. Except as expressly provided herein, you retain all other intellectual property rights in and to your proposal. Nothing herein shall obligate MOA to use or implement any proposal.



MOA Contact

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions about the competition. We are here to help and want to make sure you are able to submit the best possible proposal. We offer conference/video calls and site visits, if desired.

Tiffany Matheson Leitner
Design and Build Program Coordinator
MOA
303-303-0444 EXT. 0
designandbuild@moaonline.org

Downloadable Reference Images, FAQs and additional supplemental information will be available on the Competition Website when Competition Opens.

Schedule & Important Dates

- September 24, 2025
Competition Announced
Design Brief Published
- October 23, 2025
Competition Opens
Jurors Announced
Team Pre-Registration Opens
- February 1, 2026
Team Pre-Registration Closes
- April 26, 2026 (11:59pm MST, GMT-7)
Competition Closes / Submission deadline
- May 2026
Finalist Proposals selected
Finalists invited to create Video Presentations
- June 2026
Finalist Video Presentations due
- July 2026
Winning Entries announced

Appendix A

Site Reference Images

Contestants should review the following images of the site when developing their designs.

Marjorie Park is a whimsical sculpture garden and vibrant outdoor space located in Greenwood Village, immediately north of Fiddler’s Green Amphitheatre. Founded and maintained by the Museum of Outdoor Arts (MOA), the park spans approximately 2.5 acres and is accessible during special events, guided tours, or by appointment.

The park blends art, nature, and narrative, creating a space that feels both curated and fantastical. It is home to an enchanting Alice in Wonderland–themed sculpture series, complete with whimsical bronze sculptures and a storytelling Cabinet of Curiosities nearby, inviting an immersive sense of nostalgia and wonder. Marjorie Park, which also functions as a retention pond, integrates landscape design with sculptural imagination.

In essence, Marjorie Park offers a serene yet magical experience where art installations and natural spaces intermingle, creating an environment that enchants, educates, and inspires. Visitors encounter a place that rewards curiosity, reflection, and creative engagement, whether strolling along pathways, discovering sculptural storytelling, or attending a concert.

Below site reference photos and additional reference photos are [available for download here](#).

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Image #1 Marjorie Park Aerial View



The design site is shown here in the lower corner at the intersection of Greenwood Plaza Blvd. and Fiddler's Green Circle in the northwest corner of Marjorie Park. Designs may be cantilevered over the grassy retention area or constructed within the retention area itself. Marjorie Park is located at 6331 S. Fiddler's Green Circle, Greenwood Village, CO 80111.

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Reference Image # 2 Marjorie Park



Marjorie Park serves as part of a functional system of retention ponds. This area, while often dry, is designed to temporarily hold several inches of water within it depending on the weather conditions. Under extreme weather circumstances, water may rise as high as the boardwalk shown here.

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Reference Image # 3 Marjorie Park Pond Area



Patrons of Marjorie Park events typically view live music and other performances from this vantage point with a stage or performance area loaded onto the concrete just at the edge of the boardwalk shown here.

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Reference Image # 4 Marjorie Park Pond Area



Patrons of Marjorie Park typically sit in this area and along the stepped ledges with viewing directed toward the boardwalk area and retention pond.

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Appendix B

Inspiration Images

The following are examples of innovative sound structures.

Chrysalis Amphitheatre, Columbia MD
Carl Lee Park Pavilion & Bandshell, Murphysboro, IL
Buga Wood Pavilion, Stuttgart, DE

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Example #1

Chrysalis Amphitheatre

The *Chrysalis Amphitheatre* in Columba, MD unfurls like a luminous cocoon of interwoven steel ribbons, shimmering in hues of green and gold that echo the forest canopy around it. Its sculptural form seems to grow organically from the landscape, transforming music into a living, architectural experience beneath the open sky.



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Example #2

Carl Lee Park Pavilion

Nestled in the heart of Murphysboro, Illinois, the *Carl Lee Park Pavilion and Bandshell* is a luminous sculptural amphitheater. Its twisting stainless steel form gleams like a modern cathedral of sound, inviting musicians and audiences to converge beneath its elegant curves. Crafted in 2010 by artist John Medwedeff using Zahner's ZEPPS™ engineering, this 35-foot-long public artwork transforms performance into an immersive, shimmering experience that echoes both creativity and community spirit.



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Example #3 BUGA Wood Pavilion

The *BUGA Wood Pavilion* rises like a futuristic forest canopy, its lattice of interlocking timber shells curving with organic precision and dappled light. The structure feels both delicate and monumental, a woven cathedral of wood that blurs the boundary between nature and innovation.



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