

CONTEST BRIEF

X INSPIRELI COMPETITION



Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo
Universidad Nacional de Tucumán

Competition conditions

Praga, april 2025

Announcer

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Competition Theme

The theme of the competition is the conceptual design of the “Arsenal Memory Park”, located on a large site soon to be released for urban use in the metropolitan area of San Miguel de Tucumán, Argentina.



Imagen satelital del área metropolitana de Tucumán

By conceptual design (ideological design), we refer to a proposal with a high degree of abstraction, oriented toward formulations emphasizing qualitative and symbolic aspects.

Programmatically, the theme is defined as an Urban Park that houses an Interpretation Center for the site’s history, dedicated to preserving and conveying the memory of the events that took place at the clandestine detention, torture, and extermination center that operated on the premises from 1976 to 1978.

The development of the theme requires a prior urban development proposal for the 350-hectare site, where the main (though not exclusive) component will be the Park.

Type of the competition, conditions to participate

Architectural, student, non-anonymous, open, aimed at students from all over the world without restrictions.

The Problem Addressed by the Competition

The city of San Miguel de Tucumán has undergone significant and disorganized expansion in recent decades, forming an urban conglomerate with an estimated population of over one million inhabitants. In the northern sector of the metropolitan area, overwhelmed by urban sprawl, lies a 350-hectare site known as the “Arsenal,” formerly the base of the Argentine Army’s “Miguel de Azcuénaga” Arsenal Company. Between 1976 and 1978, a clandestine detention, torture, and extermination center operated within this military unit, as part of the repressive system established by the military dictatorship that ruled Argentina from 1976 to 1983.

Horrific crimes against humanity were committed in this center, including the murder of a number of people that, according to records and testimonies, ranges from hundreds to nearly a thousand, whose bodies were buried in mass graves within the site.

The site, now decommissioned from military use, remains abandoned, mainly due to the usage restrictions imposed by a long-standing judicial case investigating the crimes committed at this Clandestine Detention Center.

The expected conclusion of the judicial process and the consequent lifting of use restrictions presents a pressing need for metropolitan authorities to define a new urban function for the site, particularly the area that hosted the Clandestine Detention Center.

The Clandestine Detention Center

The competition site was used by the Argentine Army since the mid-20th century as an arsenal and firing range. In the 1970s, it became the base of the Miguel de Azcuénaga Arsenal Company, and between 1976 and 1978, it functioned as a clandestine detention center, acting as the provincial hub of the repressive system implemented by the military dictatorship.

Horrendous crimes were committed in this center, which have been the subject of a prolonged judicial investigation during the democratic governments that followed the dictatorship. As a result of this process, it has been established and documented that the site functioned as:

- A detention center, where prisoners were held during interrogation periods that could last for months.
- A torture center, with dedicated facilities and specialized personnel for interrogation under torture.
- An extermination center, for the execution and burial in mass graves of the prisoners.

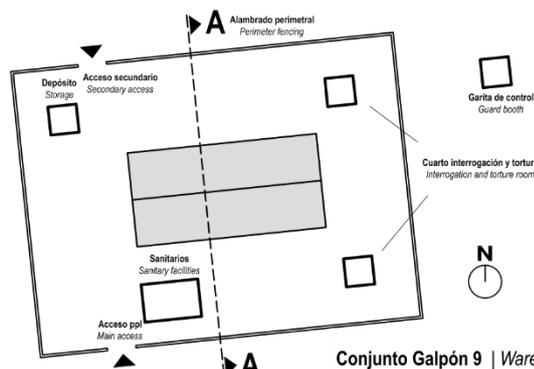
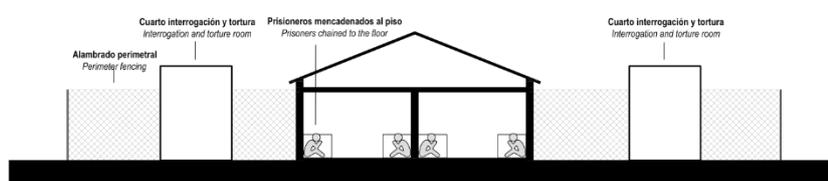
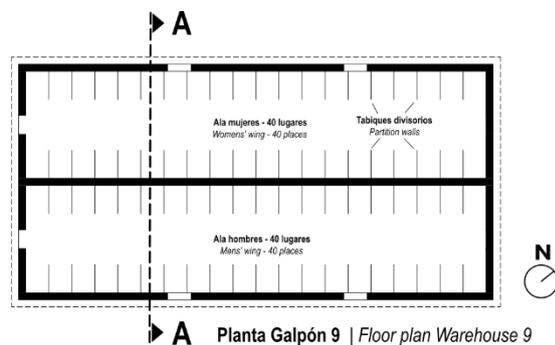
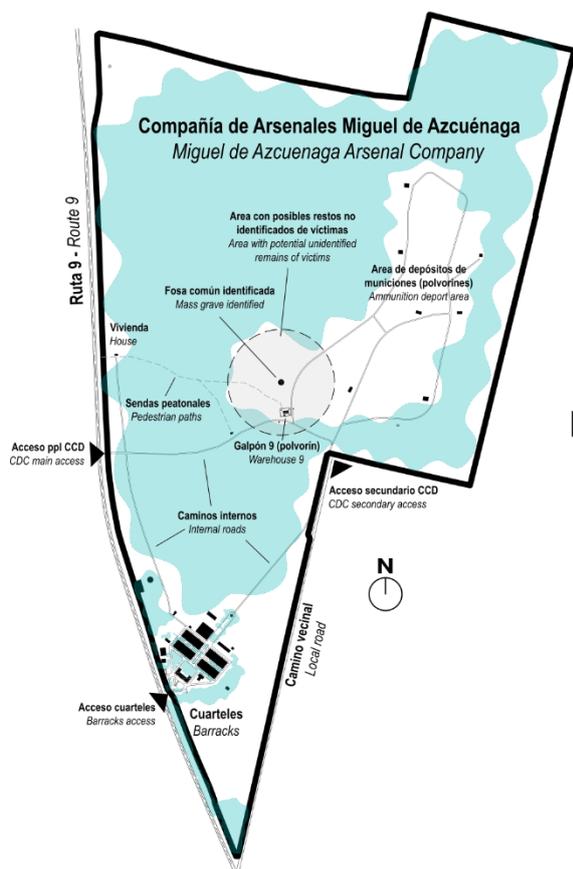
Due to the destruction of evidence, there is no clear determination of the number of prisoners held or the number of murders committed; estimates range from hundreds to nearly a thousand.

The core of the clandestine detention center was set up in the center of the military unit, repurposing one of the buildings used as an ammunition depot (Galpón 9), which for safety

reasons was located isolated from other facilities. Internally, Galpón 9 was reconfigured with low partitions every 95 cm along its two wings, dividing the spaces where prisoners were to remain shackled to the floor. In this way, two rooms of 40 spaces were configured—one for female and one for male prisoners—creating a total capacity of 80 prisoners.

CCD en 1978

CDC in 1978



The clandestine detention Center in 1978

A few meters from Galpón 9, there were four small buildings: two used for interrogation and torture, one for sanitary facilities, and one as a storage room. The entire installation was surrounded by a perimeter fence with two controlled access points. Outside the fence, there was a guard post.

Prisoners entered through separate entrances from those of the military unit. A network of internal roads, both vehicular and pedestrian, connected the different facilities. The bodies of executed prisoners or those who died under torture were buried in mass graves on the premises.

After the detention center was deactivated, efforts were made to hide and remove evidence. The small buildings, sanitary facilities, and perimeter fence surrounding Galpón 9 were demolished, and the mass graves were removed with heavy machinery to prevent their identification.

However, forensic investigations identified a mass grave a few dozen meters from Galpón 9, from which numerous bodies were identified through DNA testing. A metal roof

structure was erected over this area to protect the ongoing forensic investigation, and this structure remains visible in aerial photographs.



Warehouse 9 – Exterior and interior view



Identified mass graves

The remaining uncertainty regarding the locations of mass graves is reflected in these guidelines by defining a restricted-use area with a 200-meter radius centered on the identified grave, due to the possible presence of undiscovered human remains.

The set of barracks buildings, although not the physical site of the crimes investigated by the courts, were functionally, administratively, and logistically part of the military unit and the operation of the clandestine detention center. They are therefore considered an inseparable part of its function and an urban landmark representing its sinister history.

Proposed objectives

The objectives proposed by the competition are:

1. To appropriately urbanize the site.
 - a. To address social needs, urban problems, and environmental challenges.
 - b. To ensure harmonious integration of the site into the existing urban structure.
 - c. To produce innovative interventions that encourage improvement processes and add value to the urban sector.
2. To preserve the site's history as a tool for active memory.
 - a. To preserve the facilities of the Clandestine Detention Center as historical heritage and promote their understanding through the creation of an Interpretation Center.
 - b. To pay tribute to the victims of repression buried on the site by creating an urban park that not only houses the Interpretation Center but also includes infrastructure that makes it a vibrant urban space.

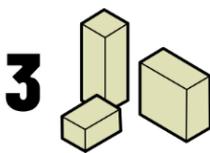
Object of the Competition

The object of the competition is the conceptual design of the "Arsenal Memory Park," with an emphasis on the symbolic dimension of the project and the goal of establishing it as an urban instrument of "active memory."

The concept of "active memory" goes beyond the passive remembrance typical of museums. It implies not only remembrance but also present-day action aimed at preventing the repetition of past atrocities. The idea is to keep history "alive" through social and participatory activities that inform and raise awareness among visitors, foster dialogue and reflection, and create civic consciousness that discourages the repetition of the tragic past.

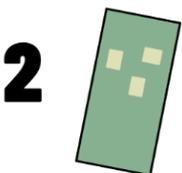
The theme includes three integrated design scales:

Escala Arquitectónica | *Architectural Scale* Diseño Centro de Interpretación | *Interpretation Center Design*



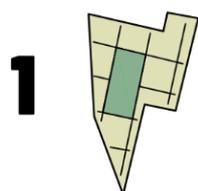
1. **Urban Scale (Site Urbanization):** Conceptual urban design of the site. It involves defining basic infrastructure (road systems), land uses, public spaces, and urban landmarks. At this level, the area assigned to the park must be defined.

Escala Sector Urbano | *Urban Sector Scale* Diseño Parque urbano | *Urban Park design*



2. **Urban Sector Scale (Park Unit):** Conceptual landscape design of the park and conceptual architectural design of the Interpretation Center. It involves the general definition of the park's natural elements (topography, water, and vegetation), its circulation system, urban equipment, and the configuration of the Interpretation Center in this context. The organization of the Interpretation Center as an activity system must be defined, establishing the general location and architectural features of its components, expressed through volumetric sketches and/or zoning.

Escala Urbana | *Urban Scale* Diseño urbano del Sitio | *Site urban design*



3. **Architectural Scale (Interpretation Center):** Preliminary architectural design of the Interpretation Center. It involves defining the morphology and internal organization of the main buildings and spaces of the Interpretation Center (as selected by the participant), to be expressed through plans of the main buildings.

Competition Categories

To encourage participation from students with different levels of training and thematic interests, and in line with Inspireli categories, the competition offers two participation modes: (a) Urban Design and (b) Architectural Design.

Both categories require the design of the Park (intermediate scale); one focuses the proposal on urban intervention, and the other on architectural design.

- A. **Urban Design Category:** Includes the development of proposals at scales 1 and 2, i.e., the conceptual urban design of the site (urban scale), which includes defining the area assigned to the park, and the landscape and architectural design of the park (urban sector scale).
- B. **Architectural Design Category:** Includes the development of proposals at scales 2 and 3, i.e., the landscape and architectural design of the park (urban sector scale), and the architectural design of the Interpretation Center (architectural scale). Since this category requires prior definition of the area assigned to the park, the brief defines a zoning scheme of the site to be used as a reference by participants entering only this category.

A CATEGORÍA DISEÑO URBANO URBAN DESIGN CATEGORY

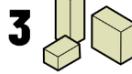


Diseño Arquitectónico & Urbano Architectural & Urban design

A&B

Escala Arquitectónica | Architectural Scale

Diseño Centro de Interpretación | Interpretation Center Design



3

Escala Sector Urbano | Urban Sector Scale

Diseño Parque urbano | Urban Park design



2

Escala Urbana | Urban Scale

Diseño urbano del Sitio | Site urban design



1

A
Diseño Urbano
Urban design

B CATEGORÍA DISEÑO ARQUITECTÓNICO ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN CATEGORY



Intervention area by category

Participants may choose to participate in only one category (A or B), developing the partial proposals corresponding to the indicated scales, or participate in both categories (A and B), developing a comprehensive proposal at all scales.

The area of intervention for participants in the Urban Design category (A) and those participating in both categories (A and B) will be the entire Arsenal site, with freedom to define the park area and urbanization.

For those participating only in the Architectural Design category (B), the brief defines the park's area and an urbanization scheme for the site that must be used as context.

Needs and Requirements Program

The program is suggested and qualitative, and open to the participant's interpretation.

1. Urban Development of the Site

The urbanization of the site must respond to the following requirements:

- Restore the urban fabric disrupted by the obstructive presence of the site during the city's expansion.
- Address the metropolitan shortage of residential space with adequate infrastructure and services.
- Address environmental needs by providing green spaces that also function as retention basins to manage runoff from higher ground.
- Integrate the sector into the urban structure by reconnecting circulation systems and assigning uses and functions according to their hierarchy and context. Special attention must be paid to the site's edge along Route 9, a fast traffic corridor with direct access to the city center and a trend toward becoming a hub for tertiary and administrative services at the metropolitan scale.
- Promote the development of a high-quality environmental and architectural urban axis along Route 9, leveraging the inductive potential of the planned Civic Center nearby (project by architect Cesar Pelli).



Particular Conditions:

- The area assigned to the park in the Urban Design category is at the participant's discretion, with the sole requirement that it must entirely contain the restricted-use area that includes the identified mass graves and Galpón 9 (200-meter radius centered on the identified grave).
- The set of barracks buildings, except for minor perimeter constructions, must be preserved. Their future use may be independent of the Interpretation Center's functions. For instance, a local university has requested a concession to establish an academic activities center in these buildings. In any scenario, this group of buildings

must be spatially integrated into the park and preserved as an emblematic urban landmark of the site.

- Any building or structure not explicitly indicated for preservation in this brief is considered to lack heritage value and may be demolished.

2. Arsenal Memory Park

The "Arsenal Memory Park" is conceived as a green oasis dedicated to honoring the victims of repression buried on the site. In addition to housing the Interpretation Center, it will fulfill environmental functions as a botanical and biological reserve and act as a retention basin to mitigate potential flooding caused by runoff from future urbanized highlands.

The park design must reflect its symbolic commemorative function and showcase the natural wealth characteristic of the province (Tucumán's tourism slogan is "Tucumán, the garden of the republic").

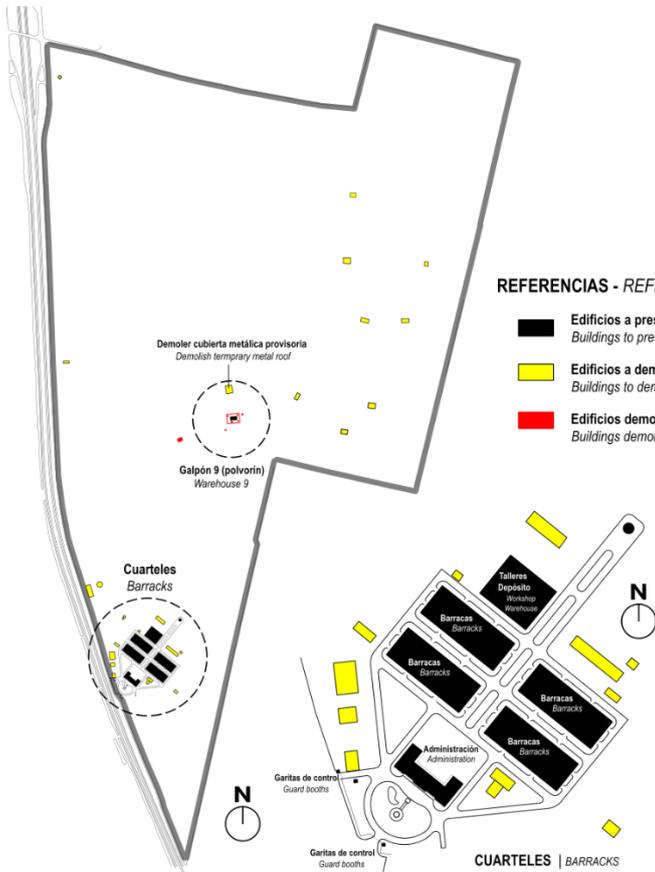
For participants in the Architectural Design category only, the brief predefines the urbanization of the Arsenal site and the park boundaries, though modifications to its perimeter are allowed as long as they do not substantially alter the proposed urban structure.



Access to the Arsenal site

Special consideration must be given to the set of barracks buildings. While they may lack specific architectural value, they have acquired historical value as the symbolic image of the site. It is therefore proposed to restore their original appearance by removing minor structures added over time. In any usage scenario, the buildings to be preserved are: (1) The administration building, (2) The barracks, (3) Workshops and storage buildings, (4) Smaller characteristic structures such as guard posts and the water tower.

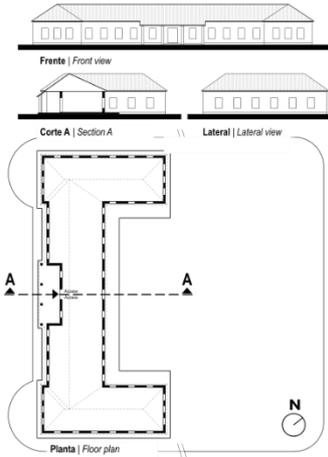
This building system may be assigned to urban uses independent of the Interpretation Center's functions or, alternatively, be adapted to support some of its activities. In the first case, their spatial and functional integration with the Interpretation Center must be maintained to allow their exhibition and visitation as emblematic urban landmarks of the clandestine center. In the second case, if functions associated with the Interpretation Center are assigned to them, these must not occupy the entirety of the proposed architectural program (which may be expanded at the participant's discretion), as the incorporation of new, purpose-built architecture for the Interpretation Center is expected.



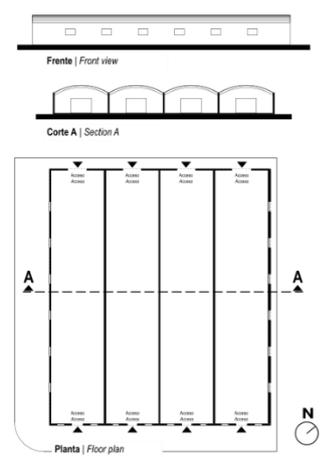
REFERENCIAS - REFERENCES

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- Edificios a demoler
Buildings to demolish
- Edificios demolidos
Buildings demolished

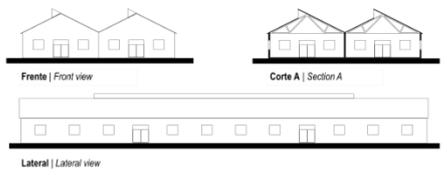
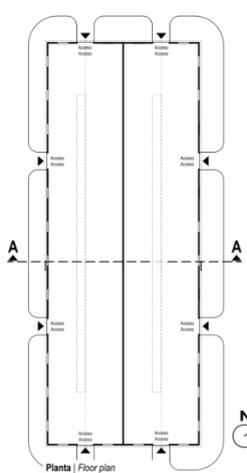
ADMINISTRACIÓN | ADMINISTRATION



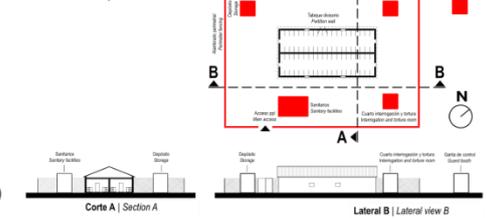
TALLERES & DEPÓSITO | STORAGE & WORKSHOPS



BARRACAS | Barracks



GALPÓN 9 | WAREHOUSE 9



Set of Buildings to Be Preserved

For the architectural proposal concerning the barracks complex, a schematic plan of the main buildings is provided, simplified to their perimeter outlines. This outline, as the iconic image of the complex, is the primary element of interest to be preserved. These buildings, built at ground level and featuring large-span trusses and arches, allow for great flexibility in reconfiguring their internal partitions. Any internal architectural solution will be the subject of a later project development stage.

3. Interpretation Center

The Interpretation Center is intended to present the events surrounding the creation and operation of the clandestine detention center, offering information that fosters historical understanding and, at the same time, sensitizes visitors through emotional and sensory experiences that encourage reflection.

In line with the concept of "active memory," the Interpretation Center will be complemented and enhanced with facilities for cultural, artistic, educational, and recreational activities that promote open dialogue, discussion, exchange of ideas, and respect for diverse perspectives.

Thus, the organization of the Interpretation Center is conceived as two integrated systems of activities: (a) Thematic Activities System, (b) Complementary Activities System.

a. Thematic Activities System

The remaining elements of the clandestine detention center must be preserved: the barracks, Galpón 9 (where detainees were held), and the restricted-use area containing the identified mass grave. At the participant's discretion, demolished and/or abandoned elements (torture rooms, perimeter fence, entrances and guard posts, internal paths, etc.) may be reconstructed to restore the original functional layout of the detention center. These constitute the historical heritage on which the thematic activities system should be based.

The suggested program for the basic thematic activities system includes:

- Incorporation of architectural infrastructure around the core of the detention center (Galpón 9, auxiliary buildings, perimeter fencing) and the mass grave area to enable public access. Surface area: at participant's discretion.
- Pavilion for the historical exhibition of the Clandestine Detention Center (approx. 1,500 m²).
- Memorial art gallery: graphic, pictorial, sculptural, audiovisual, musical works, etc. (approx. 1,500 m²).
- Memory plaza (approx. 2,500 m²).
- Interpretation center administration, staff, security, maintenance, storage, etc. (approx. 1,000 m²).
- Café, bookstore, and small commercial spaces (approx. 1,000 m²).
- Parking for regular use of the Interpretation Center: 150 cars and 5 buses (approx. 3,300 m²).

The Interpretation Center's thematic circuit should accommodate about 800 daily visitors, divided into two shifts (morning and afternoon), with peaks of up to 2,400 visitors on weekends and holidays in three shifts (morning, afternoon, evening).

b. Complementary Activities System

The core of the Interpretation Center is complemented by infrastructure for various urban activities. The suggested program includes:

- High-tech hall for immersive and interactive audiovisual performances (approx. 500 m²), e.g., 360° Geodesic Dome (see: Domo360.es).
- Indoor concert hall with capacity for 8,000 people (approx. 4,000 m²).
- Multipurpose academic complex for educational activities and workshops: 10 classrooms, library (physical and digital), lobby, circulation, administration, and services (approx. 1,500 m²).
- Conference center for lectures, congresses, exhibitions, etc.: main hall for 500 people, 2 secondary halls for 200 people, 4 meeting rooms for 50 people, lobby, circulation, administration, and services (approx. 2,500 m²).
- Amphitheater (open-air, classical Greek style) for assemblies, debates, and performances, for 500 people (approx. 1,000 m²).
- Shade structure as a social meeting place (at participant's discretion).
- Shared parking lot for large events: 1,000 vehicles (approx. 20,000 m²), sized for 50% of the peak capacity of the concert hall. As this is an occasional need, overflow parking may be accommodated along the park's roadways.

Summary of Suggested Requirements Program

INTERPRETATION CENTER		Covered Area (m ²)	Open área (m ²)
1	Administration	1.000	
2	Historical Exhibition Pavilion	1.500	
3	Memorial Art Gallery	1.500	
4	Immersive Audiovisual Showroom	500	
5	Memory Plaza		2.500
6	Commercial Premises and Services	1.000	
7	Parking		3.300
INTERPRETATION CENTER COMPLEMENT			
8	Concert/Recital Hall	4.000	
9	Classroom Complex	1.500	
10	Conference Room Complex	2.500	
11	Amphitheater		1.000
12	Shade House (at the discretion of the contestant)	-	-
13	Parking		20.000
Total		13.500	26.800

Expected Results

The competition is conceived as an academic exercise in the development of conceptual design ideas. The expected results in each case are:

1. Urban development proposal for the site: General plan of the urban sector accompanied by diagrams, explanatory texts, and/or conceptual visualizations as appropriate.
2. Proposal for the park spatial unit: General plan of the park accompanied by diagrams, explanatory texts, and/or conceptual visualizations as appropriate.
3. Architectural proposal: General plan of the Interpretation Center and plans of its main architectural components (selected at the participant's discretion), accompanied by diagrams, explanatory texts, and/or conceptual visualizations as appropriate.

Timeline and Deadlines

Competition opened, publication of conditions	1.10.2025
Presentation of the competition conditions	www.inspireli.com
Submission of competing proposals	15.6.2026
Announcement of Finalist	July 2026
Competition results announcement	Autumn 2026

Prizes and Rewards

Financial rewards

- 1st Prize – Urban Design Category: €2,000
- 1st Prize – Architectural Design Category: €2,000

Jury & judging criteria

The participants are encouraged to implement new and advanced technologies as well as sustainable yet diverse building materials into their design to create an architectural masterpiece that is bold in both form and function.

Proposal evaluation criteria

The criteria according to which the competition proposals will be evaluated are determined, without order of importance, as follows:

- a) Compliance of the proposal with the competition conditions
- b) Quality of the architectural solution: originality, creativity and real feasibility of the proposal

Jury

- Architect Enrique Javier Nuñez – Professor at the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Urbanism, University of Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- Architect Agustín Berzero – Professor at the School of Architecture, National University of Córdoba, Argentina.
- Architect Gustavo Alejandro Tripaldi – Professor at the School of Architecture and Urbanism, National University of the Northeast, Argentina.

Registration Process & Rules

The announcer of the competition may use student designs, or parts thereof, provided that the authors of these designs, or parts thereof, are awarded as winners and subsequently receive the announced prizes and their name at the Competition premises.

Inspireli Awards reserves the right to make any changes to the competition rules (deadlines, requirements, etc.). It is the responsibility of entrants to check the Inspireli awards website regularly for any changes to the terms and conditions or competition information.

The competition is only a theoretical project of what could be done, and INSPIRELI AWARDS will not be held responsible if the situation with the announcer of the competition changes, local conditions change, or unexpected circumstances happen in the construction of the project. INSPIRELI AWARDS also cannot guarantee that the competition entries will actually be used for the actual design.

INSPIRELI AWARDS reserves the right to change both the prizes and the dates and performance of the entire competition.

Registration

Students can enter the competition individually or in groups (unlimited number of members).

Submission Process & Rules

Entry and registration are governed by the standard INSPIRELI AWARDS competition rules. <https://www.inspireli.com/en/awards/rules>

Tecnological Advisor

Students will have an opportunity to consult their solutions directly from the engineers of the manufacturing companies – so called „Technological Advisors“ - from different fields in construction. Students can contact them directly via contact form at the competition's website and they can answer your questions about certain technologies or products.

Documents (PDF)

1. **Arsenal-ENG.pdf**
2. **Arsenal-SPA.pdf**
Competition guidelines in English and Spanish (this document)
3. **Arsenal-Visual.pdf**
Graphic summary of the competition guidelines.

CAD (DWG - AutoCAD 2018)

1. **Tucuman.dwg**
Database of the metropolitan area of San Miguel de Tucumán, Argentina. Requires the file Tucuman.jpg (xref).
2. **Arsenal.dwg**
Database of the urban sector of the competition. Requires the files Arsenal.jpg and Cuartel.jpg (xrefs).
3. **Edificios.dwg**
Planimetry of the competition buildings.

Images (JPG)

- **Tucumán.jpg**
Satellite image of the metropolitan area of San Miguel de Tucumán.
- **Arsenal.jpg**
Satellite image of the urban sector.
- **Cuartel.jpg**
Satellite image of the barracks buildings.

The JPG image files must be placed in the same folder as the DWG files.

Supplementary Information

1. The Arsenal Miguel de Azcuénaga (Tucumán, Argentina) as a Clandestine Detention Center. An interdisciplinary approach. Ezequiel Del Bel, Constanza Cattaneo, Marco Giusta, Matías Lepori, Sofía A. Neder
https://ri.conicet.gov.ar/bitstream/handle/11336/144418/CONICET_Digital_Nro.dd10fd74-e050-486e-9e7a-371ad88bf2f6_A.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y
2. Archaeology of Genocide: Notes from the Miguel de Azcuénaga Arsenal Company (Tucumán, Argentina). Víctor Ataliva, Ruy D. Zurita, Luciano Rodrigo Molina, Andrés S. Romano.
<https://journals.openedition.org/nuevomundo/81101>
3. Strategic-Productive Plan for Las Talitas. Mariel Sosa Paz
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LRkByqQmcR9rWP5tR1yB-c5cvteLPhPE/view?usp=sharing>
4. Impact of Housing Policies in the Municipality of Las Talitas in the Metropolitan Area of Tucumán (1975–2019). Pilar Cichero
<https://onedrive.live.com/?authkey=%21AEG%2DdouJWthricg&id=219076C5ED3B9D75%21124&cid=219076C5ED3B9D75&parId=root&parQt=sharedby&o=OneUp>