

# Memorials for the Future

Memorials for the Future is a competition that reimagines the way we think about, feel, and experience memorials. The competition will look at Washington, DC's traditional approach to permanent commemoration, and then create new ideas for honoring our diverse histories, heritage, and culture.

Deadline for Submission: May 4, 2016  
For more information: <http://future.ncpc.gov>

In partnership with the National Park Service,  
National Capital Planning Commission and  
Van Alen Institute



## Memorials for the Future: a collaboration between the National Park Service, the National Capital Planning Commission, and Van Alen Institute



Janet Echelman's sculpture '1.8' refers to the length of time in microseconds that the earth's day was shortened as a result of the 2011 earthquake and tsunami that emanated from Japan. The work is composed of layers of fiber, braided and knotted together in vibrant hues that pulse with changing wind and weather to create a choreography of undulating color. Photo by Ema Peter.

The National Park Service (NPS), the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), and Van Alen Institute are collaborating on *Memorials for the Future*, an ideas competition to reimagine how we think about, feel, and experience memorials.

*Memorials for the Future* calls for designers, artists, and social scientists to develop new ways to commemorate people and events that are more inclusive and flexible, and that enrich Washington's landscape while responding to the limitations of traditional commemoration. As the NPS celebrates its centennial in 2016, *Memorials for the Future* creates new ideas for honoring our diverse histories, heritage, and culture.

Three teams will be selected to participate in a research and design process, working closely with the competition partners to develop site-specific designs for memorials in Washington, DC that are adaptive, ephemeral, virtual, event-focused, or interactive. The teams' proposals will advance a framework for the design of 21st-century memorials and provide future memorial sponsors with fresh approaches to commemorating their subject matter.

## THE COMPETITION

Memorials enshrine what we as a society want to remember. But the places, people, and stories that we memorialize, and the audiences who engage with them, are in fact constantly changing. A memorial tells its story through subject matter and design. This story is often complex and multi-dimensional as a memorial's interpretive elements embody ideas of identity, culture, and heritage, and each have intensely personal interpretations for every individual.

As a national capital, Washington is a place of collective memory. The wealth of monuments sited throughout the city take on heightened significance as they reflect relationships among nations, of national remembrance, and of many important events and figures in our history. Often the traditional and fixed nature of memorial design does not allow for adaptation and redefinition over time, or encourage more than one interpretation of a given narrative.



'Peace Can Be Realized Even Without Order' is an interactive digital installation by teamLab. The installation commemorates the peace that is gradually restored with time after conflict. Holographic figures play instruments and dance, affected by the sounds coming from neighboring holograms. When a visitor moves toward the installation, the figures respond by pausing their performance. Photo by Flickr user Arts Electronica.

The traditional approach to developing memorials in Washington has resulted in a commemorative landscape that is thematically similar and increasingly land-intensive, which poses challenges for Washington's urban park system, and has long-term implications for the potential uses of a memorial's surrounding park setting.

The planning and design process is often costly and time consuming, which limits opportunities to groups or individuals with significant resources. Current trends raise a number of questions about the future of Washington's memorial landscape and the ability to provide space and resources for future commemorative works.

### Location

The competition proposals should be based on specific places or areas in Washington, DC. Proposals may take a physical form or may be virtual. Preference will be given to teams that propose a site or sites outside of the National Mall. The following locations are suggestions reflecting typical opportunity sites for new memorials in Washington:

Near the monumental core: The Belvedere  
Within a residential area: Randle Circle or Tenley Circle  
Around a natural setting: Hains Point

For more information on the types of sites in Washington, DC, and these sites specifically, please visit the project website - <http://future.ncpc.gov>.

### Provocations

The following provocations are meant to fuel and direct the competition submissions. Concepts that address several of these provocations are more likely to meet the competition's goals.

#### Memory

- How can we commemorate events or acts with long time frames that are still occurring today?
- How can memorials be adaptive or temporal rather than permanent?
- How can a memorial's narrative continue to evolve as new generations evaluate its significance within the larger context of our ongoing national history?

#### Identity

- How can memorials advance dialogue around contemporary social, economic, health, or ecological problems that have historical roots?
- How can memorials look forward while acknowledging a historical event or person?
- How can memorials contribute to a more inclusive

and more representative national narrative?

- How can memorial designs encourage more, rather than fewer, sponsors?

### Placemaking

- How can we memorialize, while also balancing the need for active public space?
- How can memorials engage more diverse audiences, in more flexible and interactive ways around a given narrative?
- What unconventional physical or digital forms could memorials take?
- How can memorials respond to various neighborhood contexts and scales while also commemorating national events or serving the national interest?

The competition partners invite participants to propose additional questions.

The goals of the competition are to create new approaches to and forms of memorializing:

- That advance a framework for the planning and design of commemorative works in the 21st century.
- That demonstrate how temporary, mobile, interactive or adaptive displays can provide powerful and memorable experiences that are cost-efficient.
- That develop ways to commemorate that are inclusive of multiple narratives and have the potential to be flexible as perspectives change.
- That honor the scale, context and national significance of Washington, DC.

The competition results will be displayed online and at an exhibition in Washington, DC, published in an illustrated report, and inform NCPC, NPS, and their partners on future design and policy opportunities.

## TEAMS

The competition is open to the public. Teams must include at least one designer (an artist, architect, landscape architect, urban designer and/or planner), and are encouraged to include members with expertise in technology, storytelling, history, commemoration, visual arts, and the social sciences. The competition partners will select three teams to each receive \$15,000 stipends to participate in a research and design process.



For her work 'Minimum Monument', Nele Azevedo arranged 5,000 melting ice figurines on the steps of Chamberlain Square in Birmingham, UK. The miniature human shapes represented the often forgotten civilian deaths as a result of World War I. Photo by Flickr user Steven Eggleton.

### Team Leads

To facilitate communication during the competition, each team must identify a team lead. The role of the team lead is that of a manager – this individual will be the primary point of contact with the competition partners, will make decisions on behalf of the team when necessary, and will be the sole recipient of stipend payments. It is the responsibility of the team lead to distribute the payments and tax incidence amongst the team. It is the responsibility of the team lead and not the competition partners, nor any of their agents, consultants, or advisors to notify the members of those competitors' teams about any clarifications or announcements.

### Team Travel

Teams are required to convene in Washington, DC four times: in early June for a launch event to meet members of the advisory committee and other key stakeholders; for a mid-review and final review (one in mid-July and one in early August); and for a small public exhibition in late August 2016.

Each team will have a reimbursement stipend of up to \$5,200 for flights, hotel, and ground transport. It is expected that at least two representatives from each team will attend all four events: launch, mid-review, final review and exhibition.

## JURORS

Jurors will help select finalist teams and winning teams. They will also provide feedback during the design framework working session (in Phase II) and the final presentation (in Phase III).



The AIDS Memorial Quilt is made up of more than 48,000 panels dedicated to at least 94,000 individuals lost to the AIDS pandemic. The NAMES Project displays sections of The Quilt at thousands of sites nationwide every year. Photo by Flickr user Elvert Barnes.

The following jurors are participating in this competition:

- Marcel Acosta, Executive Director, National Capital Planning Commission
- Mark Gardner, Principal, Jaklitsch / Gardner Architects
- David van der Leer, Executive Director, Van Alen Institute
- Thomas Luebke, Commission Secretary, U.S. Commission of Fine Arts
- Jonathan Marvel, Principal and Founder, Marvel Architects
- Julie Rhoad, President & CEO, The NAMES Project Foundation
- Deborah Rutter, President, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
- Kirk Savage, Professor, History, Art, and Architecture University of Pittsburgh
- Jason Schupbach, Director of Design Programs, National Endowment for the Arts
- Eric Shaw, Director, District of Columbia Office of Planning
- Gay Vietzke, Superintendent, National Mall and Memorial Parks, National Park Service

## THE PROCESS

### Phase I – Initial Application: April 11 — May 4 2016

Applications from multidisciplinary teams for this Request for Concepts are due May 4, 2016. (See submission requirements below for more information on applying.) Phase I will conclude on May 30, 2016 with the notification of the three teams selected to participate in the competition.

Finalist teams will attend a launch event in Washington, DC on June 8, 2016 and June 9, 2016. Teams will present their initial proposals to the competition partners, advisory committee, and any public attendees.

### Phase II – Research and Design Concept: June 8 — July 10, 2016

Over the course of the subsequent five weeks, teams will continue to conduct research and refine designs. Teams will participate in weekly calls with competition partners during which they will show in-progress work (via PDF sent beforehand). Teams are expected to incorporate partner's feedback from the competition partners throughout the five-week process.

For one to two days during the week of July 11th, 2016, teams will reconvene for a design framework mid-review working session. At this event, teams will first participate in a mid-review and provide:

1. A 10-minute PDF or Power Point presentation including:
  - a. Updates on their research about the subject of the memorial and how it is perceived publicly.
  - b. Refinements of the design proposal, including the memorialization approach and location(s).
2. Responses to any questions during the Q&A portion  
Subsequently, teams will participate in a working session with competition partners and jury members.

Upon completion of the working session, teams will receive the first \$5,000 installment of their \$15,000 stipend.

## Phase III – Final Designs: July 11 — August 1, 2016

Teams will have between three and four weeks to develop their final memorial proposals. During this period, teams will participate in weekly calls with competition partners (led by Van Alen Institute) and show in-progress materials via PDF.

For one to two days during the week of August 1, teams will meet again for a final design presentation. Teams will provide:

1. A 20-minute PDF or Power Point presentation including:
  - a. The developed design concept, highlighting how it meets the competition goals.
  - b. A mock-up of exhibition display including designs, implementation proposal, and demonstrating an overall implementation budget of no more than \$2,000.
2. Responses to any questions during the Q&A portion.

Upon completion of the final review, all teams will receive the second \$5,000 installment of their \$15,000 stipend.

Following the final review, the competition partners and jury members will select a winning team to be announced at the launch of the final exhibition.

## Phase IV – Exhibition Development and Installation: August 1 — September 8, 2016

During the time period between the final review and exhibition launch, teams will participate in weekly calls with competition partners and show in-progress materials for the exhibition via PDF. They will prepare:

1. Final exhibition materials and an implementation plan, delivered by August 10, 2016 with a budget not to exceed \$2,000.
2. A final proposal of between five and fifteen pages, delivered by August 10, 2016.

All teams will exhibit their work. Teams should arrive the day prior to the exhibition launch to install their work with support from competition partners. Teams will participate in the public launch event. At this time, competition partners will share a press release on competition conclusions and announce the winning team. The exhibition will remain open for two weeks, though teams will not be expected to stay for the duration of the exhibition or for its disassembly.



'Waterlicht' by Studio Roosegaarde is a virtual flood that uses LED technology, software, and lenses to produce wavy rays of light. The installation shows how high sea levels could rise if humans continue to ignore it. Photo by Yann Caradec.

At the conclusion of the research and design phase in August 2016, Van Alen Institute, NCPC, and NPS will publicly release a report summarizing design recommendations emerging from the three teams and announce the competition winner.

Upon launch of the exhibition, all teams will receive the final \$5,000 installment of their \$15,000 stipends.

## SCHEDULE

- April 18, 2016 – Preregistration deadline
- May 4, 2016 – Submission deadline
- May 30, 2016 – Finalist teams informed
- June 8, 2016 – Competition launch event
- Mid July 2016 – Design framework working session
- Early August 2016 – Final presentation
- August 8, 2016 – Final deliverables due
- September 8, 2016 – Announcement of competition winner and exhibition launch

# SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The deadline for registration and electronic submission of the Request for Concepts is 11:59 p.m. EDT on May 4, 2016.



'data.path' by Ryoji Ikeda Studio plays with how people interact with and experience large amounts of data. The digital installation is an immersive tunnel with walls serving as gigantic video screens displaying an overwhelming amount of images and electronic sounds drawn from quantitative data. Photo by photo by r2hox.

Submit your proposal electronically on the competition website with:

1. One high-resolution JPEG image to represent the team's project for promotion and publication by competition partners.

2. A single PDF document including all items listed below. The PDF should be formatted 8.5-by-11 inches in landscape orientation with a maximum file size of 10MB.

Title your PDF and JPEG files with your team lead last name followed by “\_MemorialsForTheFuture”. Hard copies of submission materials will not be accepted.

The PDF must include the following content in the order listed:

## 1. Cover Sheet

- a. A one (1) page cover sheet with the name of the

team lead and that person's phone number and email address. Team leads will serve as the sole point of contact and liaison to the competition partners throughout Phase I of the competition.

## 2. Project approach, site, and initial concepts

- a. Include a summary of no more than 500 words of the team's project approach. Teams must identify a specific site or sites, and establish a convincing argument for the commemoration of a person, issue, or narrative, its relevance, how it responds to the surrounding communities, and the viewpoint from which you plan to memorialize.

- b. Include two to three different conceptual ideas relevant for commemorating this person, issue, or narrative.

- c. Include a 100-word project summary for promotion and publication by competition partners.

## 3. Team Description

- a. Describe your team and key team members. Each team member should have a one-paragraph bio including name, experience, and qualifications.

## 4. Previous Work

- a. Include a maximum of three past projects, and if any have been realized (preferred but not required). For each project, please include the following items in a maximum of five pages total:

- i. A 150-word description of the project's relevance to this proposal, innovative design and/or policy strategies, and implementation.
- ii. A list of participating team members, including his or her role within the scope of the past project.

# PRE-REGISTRATION

Teams are encouraged to signal their intent to submit a proposal by pre-registering via <http://future.ncpc.gov> with the team lead's name and contact information by April 18, 2016. Project updates and any answers to questions submitted about the competition will be emailed to pre-registered team leads.

## QUESTIONS

Key questions and answers will be posted to the FAQ section of the competition website and emailed to registered team leads once per week while the competition is open to the public. All questions will be posted anonymously.

All questions must be submitted to the competitions manager at [memorials@vanalen.org](mailto:memorials@vanalen.org), who will work closely with the appropriate party to answer questions in a timely manner. The competitions manager will serve as the sole liaison until the winners have been identified.

## RULES AND ELIGIBILITY

This competition is open to designers and other professionals with expertise in architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, urban planning, storytelling, history, commemoration, the social sciences, community development, and other fields relevant to the topic.

No partner or employee of any jury member or advisory committee member may participate in the competition, nor may any jury member compete in association with, advise, or assist a competition in any way. Similarly, no employee or family member of Van Alen Institute or NCPC or NPS may participate in this competition, advise or assist applicants in any way.

All competition submission text must be in English. In submitting an entry, entrants warrant that the material is their original work, does not infringe upon copyright law, and that they have permission to publish the material. By submitting an entry, the team agrees that Van Alen Institute, the National Park Service, and the National Capital Planning Commission are granted non-exclusive reproduction rights to all entries for advertising, promotion, exhibition, print publication and internet purposes directly relating to the competition.

Van Alen Institute, the National Park Service, and the National Capital Planning Commission shall have no responsibility for any unauthorized use of the entrants' works by any third party, including but not limited to the sponsors.

Individuals may participate in only one team submission.

Dates are subject to change.

No memorial will be built as a direct result of this competition.

All entries must be submitted to the Competition website by 11:59p.m. EDT on May 4, 2016. Late entries will be considered ineligible. There is no entry fee.

## EVALUATION

Phase I proposal submissions will be evaluated by the jury according to the following criteria:

- Responsiveness to the goals of the competition
- Overall strength and quality in approach to developing initial concept, design, and narrative
- Multidisciplinary nature of team members and partners
- Experience working on research and design projects that incorporate understanding of local context and narratives
- Experience engaging diverse public audiences
- Clear communication of a process to relate conceptual narratives to a general audience
- Commemoration subject is a recognizable part of the American story, reflective of our heritage, history, and culture
- Clear communication of a process to engage the surrounding community with the proposed concept design
- Location selected (locations NOT on the National Mall will be given preference)

## COMPETITION PARTNER ROLES

This initiative is a partnership between Van Alen Institute, NCPC, and NPS. The process for arriving at the final deliverables is a collaborative process between the competition partners and the teams. Teams will participate in weekly calls during Phases II through IV, and share in-progress materials via PDF. Teams are encouraged to incorporate feedback throughout to competition process.

### About Van Alen Institute

At Van Alen Institute, we believe design can transform cities, landscapes, and regions to improve people's lives. We collaborate with communities, scholars, policymakers, and professionals on local and global initiatives that rigorously investigate the most pressing social, cultural, and ecological competitions of tomorrow. Building on more than a century of experience, we develop cross-disciplinary research, provocative public programs, and inventive design competitions.

[www.vanalen.org](http://www.vanalen.org)

### About the National Park Service

More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 410 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities.

[www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)

### About the National Capital Planning Commission

Established by Congress in 1924, the National Capital Planning Commission is the federal government's central planning agency for the Washington, DC region. NCPC preserves and enhances the extraordinary historical, cultural, and natural resources and federal assets of the region to support the needs of the federal government and enrich the lives of the region's visitors, workers, and residents.

[www.ncpc.gov](http://www.ncpc.gov)