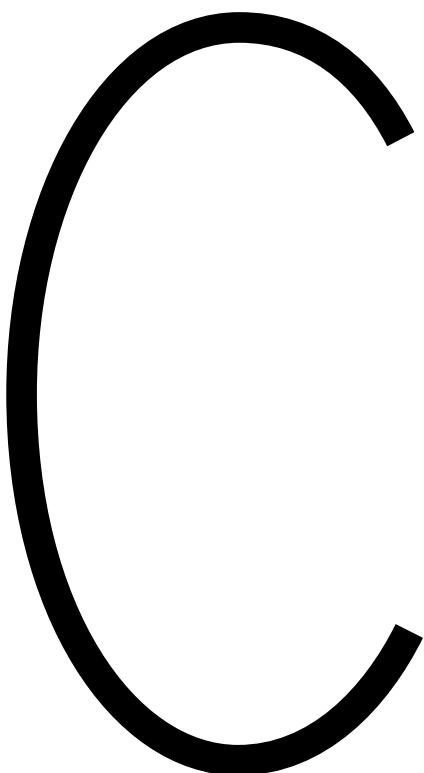


# Open Call Prix de Rome Architecture 2026



**creative industries  
fund NL**

**design  
architecture  
digital culture**

**p.o. box 29066  
3001 gb rotterdam**

**groothandelsgebouw  
entrance c, 5e etage  
weena 723, rotterdam**

**+31 (0)10 436 16 00**

**The Creative Industries Fund NL invites architects, urban designers, landscape architects and other spatial design practitioners up to 40 years of age to participate in the oldest and most prestigious award for architecture in the Netherlands: the Prix de Rome Architecture. The winner receives €60,000 and support for an international residency of their choice. The deadline is 23 February 2026, 16:00 hours CET.**

The Prix de Rome Architecture is commissioned by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and organised every four years by the Creative Industries Fund NL. The aim of the award is to identify, encourage and support promising architects, urban designers, landscape architects and other spatial designers in their professional development and visibility. At the same time, the award contributes to innovation within the field and fuels the debate on the role of architecture and spatial design in society.

### **theme: terminal velocity**

Our lives are caught within accelerating systems of divisive politics, widening inequalities, material exhaustion, technological upheaval, and ecological degradation. This becomes materially and spatially most legible in a single unsettling quantification: the total weight of that which is human made has surpassed all living biomass on the planet, and continues to grow beyond planetary limits. Within this acceleration, the slow and plodding practice of architecture struggles to keep pace. As the world it helped construct expands beyond grasp, architecture's promise of a better life through design seems to slip away. We have entered a condition of Terminal Velocity: a state in which acceleration toward breakdown has reached its peak. The accelerating systems around us have outpaced architecture's capacity to turn speculative alternatives into situated realities. How can architecture once again deliver on its promise? To what ends? And for whom?

The Prix de Rome Architecture, the oldest and most prestigious architecture award in the Netherlands, invites architects, urbanists, landscape architects, and other spatial design practitioners up to the age of 40 to examine the limits and possibilities of architectural intervention through the theme of Terminal Velocity. The jury calls for a radical reconsideration of architectural intelligence, not as the pursuit of speed, novelty, or optics, but as the interface between the speculative and the situated; between ideas and their ecological, technological, social, and material realities. With Terminal Velocity, the Prix de Rome Architecture seeks to identify and support emerging spatial practitioners whose work demonstrates both critical insight and transformative potential.

### **first phase: speculate**

For the first phase, the Open Call, the jury asks applicants to submit a spatial statement that fits within a 30 x 30 x 30-centimetre format. Candidates are invited to interpret its content freely, provided it expresses their position through three elements:

- **Acceleration:** an exponential trajectory reshaping our world at a speed architecture has yet to adequately address.
- **Site:** usually assigned in architectural competitions, but in the Prix de Rome applicants are asked to identify a site themselves, not merely as a location, but as a field of exchange in which the chosen acceleration acts. The site must be in the Netherlands or, if abroad, maintain a strong relation to the Netherlands.
- **Interface:** a way through which architecture engages with the chosen acceleration and site, for example through form, material, technology, social processes, or political discourse. What are the switches, levers, or dials through which architecture can act and adapt?

Through these three elements, applicants are encouraged to articulate a critical and imaginative position towards the theme of Terminal Velocity and the role of architecture in relation to accelerating systems.

### **second phase: situate**

From all anonymous submissions, a shortlist of four candidates will be selected. These candidates will proceed to the second phase, in which they will further develop their proposals from mid-April to mid-August 2026, and present their work in an exhibition at the Nieuwe Instituut in December 2026. In this phase, the speculative is confronted with the situated. The jury will look for architectural articulations that demonstrate awareness of ecological, technical, social, and material realities, and that propose new forms of spatial intelligence and engagement.

### **Submitting your proposal**

To participate in this open call, deliver a spatial statement (max. 30 x 30 x 30 cm) to the office of the Stimuleringsfonds in Rotterdam (Weena 723, Groothandelsgebouw, Entrance C, 5th floor, room C5.069) before **23 February 2026, 16:00 CET**. Please make an appointment via [prixderome@stimuleringsfonds.nl](mailto:prixderome@stimuleringsfonds.nl). In addition, send the following documents (in English and as a PDF) to [prixderome@stimuleringsfonds.nl](mailto:prixderome@stimuleringsfonds.nl), also before 23 February 2026, 16:00 CET:

- A supporting text about the spatial statement (max. 2 A4 pages, portrait orientation).
- A CV that includes your date of birth, place of residence, education, work history and, if applicable, links to your website(s) (max. 2 A4 pages, portrait orientation). This CV will not be shared with the jury.
- A representative photograph of the spatial statement for administrative and communication purposes.

*Please note:* Ensure that the work can be assessed anonymously by the jury. We cannot accept spatial statements that are unsuitable for long-term storage and handling, for example in the case of perishable or living organic material, and/or very heavy objects. The spatial statement may be included in the exhibition in the Nieuwe Instituut but will remain the property of the applicant. After a request from the Creative Industries Fund, the spatial statement must be collected within three weeks. If the submission is not collected within this period, it will be disposed of.

### **entry requirements**

The Prix de Rome Architecture 2026 is open to architects, landscape architects, urban planners, and other spatial design practitioners. In addition, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Applicants must not be older than 40 (born in 1986 or later).
- Not enrolled in a bachelor's or master's programme.
- Active and embedded in the Dutch architectural field for at least one year.
- If employed at a larger firm, the applicant must work independently and in a personal capacity on the assignment.
- In the case of collaborative practices, all members meet all of the above-mentioned requirements.

*Please note:* The Prix de Rome cannot be awarded to legal entities, members of the jury, employees of the Creative Industries Fund NL, members of the supervisory boards of the Creative Industries Fund NL, or previous winners of the Prix de Rome.

## Jury

The jury of the Prix de Rome Architecture 2026 consists of:

- Dirk Sijmons (co-founder H+N+S Landschapsarchitecten)
- Ekim Tan (founder Games for Cities, director Play the City)
- Inez Tan (partner Office Winhov)
- Lesia Topolnyk (founder StudioSpaceStation, winner Prix de Rome Architecture 2022)
- Nick Axel (deputy editor e-flux Architecture, head Architectural Design Gerrit Rietveld Academie)
- Paul Cournet (founder CLOUD)
- Syb Groeneveld (director Creative Industries Fund NL, technical chair Prix de Rome Architecture)

## assessment criteria

The jury will assess the applications based on the following criteria:

- The technical, intellectual, and artistic qualities of the proposal.
- The relevance, urgency, and sensitivity of the proposal in responding to the theme.
- The experimental and forward-thinking engagement of the proposal with contemporary architectural discourse and practice.

## results

The shortlist will be announced at the beginning of April 2026. The working period for the shortlisted candidates runs from mid-April to mid-August. Shortlisted candidates will receive compensation for this four-month working period. No compensation will be provided for participating in the Open Call.

The winner will be selected in December 2026. The winner of the Prix de Rome Architecture 2026 will receive a prize of € 60.000 and financial support for an international residency of their choice.

## questions

For questions, please contact Hyun Vin Kaspers or Tom Versteeg via [prixderome@stimuleringsfonds.nl](mailto:prixderome@stimuleringsfonds.nl) or +31 10 436 1600. For more information on the Prix de Rome Architecture 2026, please visit our [website](#).