

CHEMNITZ INSIDE: UPGRADE + CONNECT

FAQ on the European Architecture Competition for Students – Key Questions and Answers

Why is the competition being launched?

The area behind the Karl Marx Monument and the building complex at Brückenstraße 10/12 is currently used mostly as a parking lot. The potential of this centrally located and urbanistically significant site in the heart of Chemnitz has so far gone untapped. However, the City of Chemnitz intends to purchase a large portion of this land and plans to build a multifunctional arena there, with a capacity of approximately 8,500 to 11,500 guests.

The aim of the competition is to reflect the city's vision and gather diverse, creative proposals for upgrading and revitalizing this area. The location has the potential to develop into a "sports and culture campus" within the city center.

Chemnitz University of Technology does not offer degree programs in architecture, landscape architecture, or urban planning. However, due to its unique history and the abundance of underutilized spaces and vacant buildings, the city remains highly attractive to students and graduates of these disciplines. For this reason, the competition invites European students of the aforementioned fields to creatively engage with this site and, by extension, with the city of Chemnitz itself. Participants not only have the opportunity to contribute to the European Capital of Culture 2025 but also to present their work to a broad audience.

When does the architecture competition take place?

The competition will be held during the summer semester of 2025, in the year of the Capital of Culture. The call for entries will be published in March and will include all key information. From that point, students will have around 100 days to develop their ideas and visions. The final submission deadline is July 31, 2025. Questions regarding the competition or the call can be submitted until April 17, 2025. All questions and answers will be made available to participants on the website of the association "Baukultur für Chemnitz e.V." (www.baukultur-chemnitz.de).

Is the competition awarded with prize money?

Yes, the competition offers prize money. A total of €5,000 will be awarded as prizes and honorable mentions, distributed as follows:

1st Prize: €2,000

2nd Prize: €1,000

3rd Prize: €500

4 Honorable Mentions: €250 each

Audience Award: €500

The number and amount of prizes may be changed upon unanimous decision of the jury.

Will there be an award ceremony?

Of course! Outstanding work deserves to be celebrated. The winners and honorable mentions will be officially announced during an award ceremony on September 27, 2025, in Chemnitz – most likely at the “Open Space” venue directly behind the Karl Marx Monument.

Simultaneously, the light art festival “Light our Vision” (LOV) will take place in Chemnitz from September 24 to 27, during which the audience award will also be presented.

Will the submissions be presented publicly?

Yes! The competition entries will be shown as light art installations to all festival visitors during the “Light our Vision” (LOV) festival on the competition site.

The best works will also be displayed as banners or posters at the “Open Space.”

Additionally, all submissions will be published on the website of the association “Baukultur für Chemnitz e.V.”

Who can participate?

Students of architecture, landscape architecture (as part of a team with architecture and/or urban planning students), and urban planning from universities and colleges throughout Europe are eligible to participate.

The project can be worked on as part of a semester course or independently alongside studies.

What do the basketball team “Niners” have to do with this?

The Niners are a successful basketball team from Chemnitz, founded in 1999. They’ve been playing in the German Basketball Bundesliga since 2020 and won the FIBA Europe Cup in 2024.

To continue their success, the Niners are hoping for a new venue. A public multifunctional arena for cultural and sports activities is planned on the competition site, which would also serve as the Niners’ home base.

This multifunctional hall is a mandatory component to be included in student proposals for the area.

How do the originally planned government offices and the City Council’s decision on a new pedestrian/cycling axis factor in?

The new pedestrian and cycling route is a central element of the design concept.

This pathway runs from Stadthallenpark through the building complex at Brückenstraße 10/12 to Theaterplatz. Locals often refer to it as the “Party Fold” (“Parteifalte”), due to its shape and former usage. This path represents a vital pedestrian connection between the city center and the area northeast of Theaterplatz, which includes the university library and the Gründerzeit-style “Brühl” district.

Currently, however, this important route is often avoided, especially during the evening and nighttime hours.

Originally, the competition area was designated for a government office complex, but this plan was deemed unsuitable for revitalizing this urbanistically significant site.

After office hours and on weekends, the area would see little to no foot traffic.

The new vision seeks to activate this space, promote use of the new pedestrian/cycling axis, and upgrade the area both functionally and aesthetically!

Who is supporting the competition?

The student architecture competition is organized by the Chamber of Architects of Saxony, in collaboration with the City of Chemnitz, the association “Baukultur für Chemnitz e.V.”, and the Association of German Architects (BDA).

Where can I find more info? How do I get involved?

All relevant information, registration details, and downloads are available on the website of the association “Baukultur für Chemnitz e.V.”