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International Design Challenge

# COMPACT CITY LIVING I

## The Microhome Challenge

First Edition

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# Compact City Living: The Microhome Challenge

## Introduction

In the 21st century, urbanization has become an unstoppable force, reshaping the way we live, work, and interact within our cities. As populations continue to surge in urban centers, the demand for housing has intensified, leading to skyrocketing property prices and a dwindling availability of space. This rapid urban expansion, coupled with the environmental challenges of our time, has placed immense pressure on architects, urban planners, and designers to rethink how we approach the concept of living spaces.

Space, once abundant, has now become a luxury. In cities around the world, individuals and families are increasingly faced with the challenge of making do with less, while still striving to maintain a high quality of life. Traditional housing models are often ill-suited to the demands of modern urban living, necessitating a shift towards innovative solutions that prioritize efficiency, sustainability, and adaptability.

The microhome emerges as a beacon of possibility in this context—a small yet sophisticated living space that offers a solution to the constraints of urban environments. These compact dwellings challenge conventional notions of what a home can be, proving that even the smallest of spaces can be both functional and beautiful. They represent a growing movement towards minimalism, where less truly is more, and every square foot is utilized to its fullest potential.

"Compact City Living - The Microhome Challenge" by Archiol Competitions is an invitation to architects, designers, and creative minds worldwide to explore this exciting frontier in residential design. This competition is not just about creating small homes; it's about envisioning a new way of living that responds to the needs of contemporary urban dwellers. Participants are tasked with designing microhomes that do more than just conserve space—they must also foster a sense of community, integrate seamlessly into their urban contexts, and promote sustainable living practices.

In an era where the environmental footprint of our buildings is under increasing scrutiny, microhomes offer a sustainable alternative to traditional housing. They use fewer resources, generate less waste, and encourage a lifestyle that is in harmony with the environment. Moreover, they challenge designers to think creatively, pushing the boundaries of what is possible in a limited space. Archiol Competitions encourages participants to take on this challenge and contribute their unique perspectives to the global discourse on urban living. Whether through innovative layouts, smart technology integration, or sustainable material choices, each design should reflect a deep understanding of the complexities and opportunities presented by the urban environment.

This competition is a platform for visionaries to redefine urban living, to create spaces that are not only practical but also inspiring, and to set new standards for what compact living can achieve. We look forward to seeing how you will transform the future of our cities, one microhome at a time.

## Objective

The primary objective of this competition is to challenge participants to conceive a microhome that encapsulates the essence of compact, efficient living while thoughtfully addressing the complex issues of urban density, affordability, and sustainability. As urban populations swell and available living spaces shrink, the demand for innovative housing solutions that make the most of limited space has become increasingly urgent.

Participants are tasked with designing a microhome that not only meets the basic requirements of shelter but also enhances the quality of life for its occupants. The goal is to reimagine the concept of "home" within a small footprint, where every square meter is optimized for functionality, comfort, and aesthetic appeal.

## The Building Program

Participants are required to design a microhome with the following programmatic elements:

- Living Space: A multi-functional area that serves as a living room, dining area, and workspace.
- Sleeping Area: A space that provides comfort and privacy for rest, which can be integrated or separate from the living space.
- Kitchen: A compact and efficient kitchen area equipped with essential appliances and storage.
- Bathroom: A fully functional bathroom with necessary amenities.
- Storage: Adequate storage solutions that blend seamlessly with the overall design.

## Site

Participants can choose an urban site of their preference, whether a vacant plot, rooftop, or infill location. The site should reflect the challenges of high-density urban living and provide context for the microhome design. Participants are encouraged to select a site that aligns with their design narrative and enhances the livability of the microhome.

## Sustainability

Sustainability is a key criterion in this competition. Participants should incorporate sustainable design principles, such as:

- Use of eco-friendly and locally sourced materials.
- Energy-efficient systems and renewable energy integration.
- Water conservation measures and waste management solutions.
- Design strategies that reduce the environmental impact of the microhome.

## Project Proposal Requirements

Participants must submit a project proposal that includes:

- A clear and compelling design narrative explaining the concept and rationale behind the microhome.
- Detailed floor plans, elevations, and sections that illustrate the spatial organization and functional layout of the microhome.
- Renderings or visualizations that convey the aesthetic quality and experience of the microhome.
- A site plan that demonstrates the relationship between the microhome and its urban context.

## Timeline

- Registration Deadline: 23rd January 2026
- Submission Deadline: 2nd February 2026
- Winners Announcement: 3rd May 2026

## Submission Requirements

### File Format:

- All entries must be submitted as a single PDF document.

### Sheets:

- Minimum of 3 sheets, maximum of 6 sheets.
- Each sheet should include designs, drawings, and views that effectively communicate the project concept.

### Text Explanation:

- Each sheet must contain explanatory text that describes and supports your design decisions.
- Text should be clear and concise, highlighting the main ideas and features of the project.

### Content to Include (per sheet):

- Design Concepts: Conceptual drawings, diagrams, and sketches.
- Plans, Elevations, and Sections: Architectural plans, cross-sections, and elevations.
- Views and Renderings: 3D views, perspectives, or rendered images of the project.
- Diagrams: Illustrations explaining circulation, spatial relationships, environmental or structural concepts.

### Resolution and Quality:

- All sheets should be high-quality, legible, and visually clear.

### File Size:

- The total file size should not exceed 20 MB.

### Naming Convention:

- The file should be named as: CompetitionName\_ParticipationCode.pdf

### Anonymity:

- No names, logos, or identifying marks should appear on any of the submitted sheets to ensure anonymity during judging.

## **Submission Guidelines**

### Sign in to Your Account:

- Visit the Archiol website and sign in to your account.

### Access Your Competition Submissions:

- In the header, click on the arrow beside your profile picture. Select the option labeled "My Competition Submissions."

### Submit Your Entry:

- Click on the "Submit My Entry" button.

### Select Competition:

- Choose the competition name for which you wish to submit your entry.

### Enter Participation Code:

- Input the participation code that was generated during your registration.

### Title Your Submission:

- Provide a title for your submission.

### Upload Title Image:

- Upload the image that will represent your project.

### Upload Design PDF:

- Submit your project in PDF format (ensure it meets the competition's requirements).

### Consent:

- Check the box to agree to the competition terms and conditions.

### Submit:

- After filling in all required fields, click "Submit."

### Confirmation:

- Your submission will appear in "My Competition Submissions" within 24 hours.

## **Eligibility**

The competition is open to all architects, designers, students, and creative individuals globally. There are no restrictions on age or nationality.

## **Contact Details**

For any inquiries or further information, please contact us at:

- Email: [info@archiolcompetitions.com](mailto:info@archiolcompetitions.com)
- Website: [www.archiolcompetitions.com](http://www.archiolcompetitions.com)