

YOU AND YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

COMPETITION BRIEF

Supported by:



Organis by:



Photo Credit: Bhaumik Kaji



INTRODUCTION

The Charles Correa Foundation is organizing its fourth biennial Z-axis Conference, entitled '*You and Your Neighbourhood*'; the previous three [conferences](#) focused on various issues concerning cities, equality and architecture, each one drawing more than 900 attendees from diverse disciplines, and from across the globe.

The COVID-19 pandemic has restricted the ability to bring people together, and at the same time it has led us to focus more on the more immediate spaces around us. Thus Z-axis 2020 centres on the question: How can we improve our own neighbourhoods? In his essay '*Scanning the Options*', Charles Correa wrote that "Architecture is an agent of change", and that an architect is a "generalist who speculates on how the pieces could fit together in more advantageous ways. One who is concerned with what might be."

Z-axis 2020 looks at the nature of today's urbanism at four distinct scales and thresholds that define public spaces in our cities: neighbourhood, commons, the street and the doorstep — and how they relate to each other. Through a virtual conference and a design competition, Z-axis will recognise and award creative individuals and teams who will bring change at each of these thresholds.



'You and Your Neighbourhood' is the title of Charles Correa's Masters Thesis at MIT, 1955, for which he made an animated film. Correa was the scriptwriter, animator, photographer and director.

INTENT

Over a period of 4 months, we will work together towards making our neighbourhoods more liveable and accessible. This will be done by CCF receiving, selecting and supporting proposals aimed at transforming and improving neighbourhoods for their residents.

India's response to COVID-19 has exposed the inequalities as well as systemic problems in Indian cities, and civic society more broadly. In these tumultuous times, CCF is committed to acting as a catalyst to facilitate architects, planners and designers, each of whom are motivated to spur urban change.

Abandoning the traditional conference setting of the Kala Academy in Panaji, Z-axis 2020 will be a completely virtual conference, making it easily accessible to everyone interested in participating in these discussions. Z-axis 2020 looks at promoting active engagement between citizens, their community and their influences on the public realm, by channelling participants to bring about change.

Through the conceptualisation of a design competition, Z-axis 2020 intends to be a social design endeavour that encourages creative thinkers to use their own neighbourhoods as a platform, to create change in public space around us — through implementable ideas that could range all the way from innovation in governance structures to small scale physical improvements that trigger more systemic change.



FORMAT

Z-axis 2020 is developed as a forum that brings together ideas at all scales, that inform both top-down and bottom-up approach as being simultaneously valid.

The conference will consist of two parts:

- A virtual lecture series organised by CCF to present the idea and examples of urban transformation driven by a range of stakeholders through a set of 10 lectures strategically planned in September 2020. The lecture series is set up to reach out and engage with professionals, students and change makers across the country.
- A design competition, which will be over a 3-month period, that activates the profession to re-think their own neighbourhood across its scales in the public realm. The intent of the competition is to spark ideas for the physical improvements in neighbourhoods, driven by people.



Photo: Ibrahim Rifath



AIM

Z-axis 2020 aims to drive professionals, not as experts but as facilitators, to develop, design and plan creative solutions within their neighbourhoods for more meaningful engagements with residents.

Through multiple participatory design projects, in neighbourhoods across the world, Z-axis intends to boost public ownership over local planning processes.

PARTICIPATION

The design competition is open to all individuals who are registered for the Z-axis 2020 event.

Registered participants may form teams together, in order to compete in the competition. There is no upper-limit to the number of members in a team.

Online registration (as a team) can be completed on the official website: www.charlescorreafoundation.org/category/z-axis/ from Monday 7 September, up to Monday 28 September, 6:00PM IST.

Upon confirmation, an email with an entry code will be dispatched within a week of completing and submitting the registration form. This code should be used in all correspondence regarding the competition.



Photo: Gayatri Malhotra

4 SCALES OF THRESHOLD

A single entry should attempt to resolve only one specific scale, in order to focus on generating an effective, quality solution.

While filling the registration form, teams will be asked to mention the scale at which they are attempting to design a solution.

For the scales “Redefining the City for the Public” and “Commons and the City” implementation is not mandatory.

For the scales “Streets in the Neighbourhood” and “Homes in the Street” prototyping, or partial implementation of the project will be appreciated, but is not mandatory — provided there is clarity in the implementation strategy.

For each of the four scales, an award worth ₹ 75,000 will be conferred to the winning entry. Up to two more innovative and tactical entries are eligible for a special mention.

One project will be awarded the Z-axis jury award, for their extraordinary vision to develop their neighbourhoods. All winning entries will be displayed on the official website of the Charles Correa Foundation and social media handles along with the winning team.

Since this is a social design challenge, it is not an abstract idea competition. The potential to implement and replicate ideas is key during the whole process of design development.



“Heirarchy of space” section by Charles Correa — with the four scales of threshold to be addressed through Z-axis 2020.



Photo: Rajesh Vora

GUIDELINES

Each project should be developed as a change from the bottom-up rather than from the top-down.

The design and execution of each project may be managed as an organic process and make room for adaptation to local conditions.

Each project can aim to strengthen local organizations and communities. Prototypes should be constructed according to their ability to increase local skill development and neighbourhood management capacity.

Each project may be supported by local institutions with village panchayats, urban local bodies, co-operative societies, religious, youth, community-based organisations, residents and self-help groups playing a key role in research, design and execution.

Implementation or prototyping funds for the project may be sought from Local Authorities (Municipalities / Panchayats / Smart City / MP / MLA development funds, etc.) or from CSR funds of corporations.

The development process of each project must be based primarily on confidence and learning rather than on experts and training.



MATERIALS PROVIDED

Beyond the lectures, and discussions that emerge from the virtual conference webinar, participants will be provided with a guide book that would help with design development. CCF will also provide reading materials before the lectures, to orient participants to the speakers, their work, and research interests.

Recordings and transcripts of the webinars would also be made available to participants after the lectures, to utilise in the design process at any given time.

Webcasts and webinars will also allow interactions amongst CCF and the participants, enabling two way communication to ask speakers and CCF questions via live chat, both in public forum and later, in a more private setting, through chat rooms. Based on the number of registrations, we may be able to establish direct communication between speakers and participants, during the month of October.

These sessions would benefit the participants as it would provide:

- Real-time audio/video communication.
- Text communication via chat.
- Presentation of slideshows or screen content.
- Video streaming.
- Sharing and downloading of additional material.
- Practical possibility of recording complete lectures and sharing or viewing them afterwards.
- Surveys or quizzes in real time.



-Photo: Annie Spratt

EVALUATION CRITERIA

All teams will be given primary guidelines to start their participatory design project. CCF would encourage participants to look at the entire planning process from a research perspective, documenting every discovery, observation, and interaction in order to create a design intervention that accumulates all available resources. The following are recommended questions which need to be addressed and represented through the final submission:

- Does the project address local needs?
- Is there support through data collection and mapping?
- Are the objectives in line with the research?
- Is there clarity on a strategy for implementation?
- What is the budget? How feasible is the project?
- If it is a specific solution, how can it be replicated?

The final presentation must consist of 3 sheets. A recommended template will be shared in October. The sheets must be accompanied by a video, (no longer than 2 minutes), which explains the journey and emphasizes the participant's role as an agent of change.

One sheet must detail neighbourhood mapping and analysis, as well as implementation strategy. The others may focus on the design development, and details.



SPEAKERS AND THEMES

Charles Correa Memorial Lecture *Tuesday 1 September*

The third of a biennial lecture series to celebrate the legacy of Charles Correa, this lecture is delivered on 1st September, Correa's 90th birth anniversary. The lecturer will be a person whose values and work exemplify the interest and issues that Charles Correa engaged with.

Speakers

SWARNABH GHOSH

Cambridge

MIRAI CHATTERJEE

Ahmedabad

Discussant

RANJIT HOSKOTE

Mumbai

Redefining the City for the Public *Saturday 5 September*

Starting at the scale of the city, these lectures focus on larger precincts, and the issues within them. The speakers will address cities across the developing world, with a focus on settlements and urban renewal projects.

Speakers

MONA FAWAZ

Beirut

FELIPE VERA

Buenos Aires

KAREEM IBRAHIM

Cairo

Discussant

ANTHONY ACCIAVATTI

New York

Commons and the City *Saturday 12 September*

The second scale — the “commons” will discuss a rapidly diminishing space in developing cities. The speakers will discuss the need for commons, through history, and address relationships between citizens, commons and the city.

Speakers

LIANE LEFAIVRE

Paris

SUSHMA IYENGAR

Bhuj

AZIZA CHAOUNI

Fez + Toronto

Discussant

SHIVANI CHAUDHRY

New Delhi

Streets in the Neighbourhood *Saturday 19 September*

The third scale will focus on the nature and development of urban neighbourhoods, through linkages — the speakers will highlight ways of making streets more accessible and practical to people from the neighbourhood.

Speakers

SWATI RAMANATHAN

Bangalore

PRASANNA DESAI

Pune

NIDHI GULATI

New York

Discussant

VINEET DIWADKAR

New York

Homes in the Street *Saturday 26 September*

The last scale, is also the most intimate — that of the doorstep in a home. The speakers will explore the relationship that our homes have with the street. The smallest element in the web of urbanism will provide a canvas to discuss the larger picture once again.

Speakers

TOM AVERMAETE

Zurich

ZHANG KE

Beijing

ALEJANDRO ARAVENA

Santiago

Discussant

RAHUL MEHROTRA

Mumbai + Boston

