



COMPETITION RFP

Competition

Since biblical times, the sukkah—a temporary shelter celebrating the harvest and commemorating the exodus from Egypt—has served as the symbolic centerpiece of the Jewish festival of Sukkot. Today, revisiting the ritual of building a sukkah offers the opportunity to reimagine historically rooted ways of making, while exploring themes of transience, hospitality, and community.

The Detroit Edition

Detroit, home to 1300 urban farms, is also the only UNESCO City of Design in the United States. **Sukkah x Detroit** celebrates both. By soliciting contemporary sukkah design proposals for Detroit's Capitol Park, the competition looks to combine design, agriculture, and cultural programming for this first edition of the Sukkah x Detroit event.

The week-long **Sukkah x Detroit** celebration will take place on September 23-30, 2018, as an official event in Detroit's Month of Design. Throughout the week, 5-7 sukkahs, selected through this competition, will be showcased in historic Capitol Park, located in downtown Detroit. Concurrently, a broad array of programming—farmers markets and pop-up dinners featuring local growers and chefs, educational events, and lectures by designers and architects—will activate the Sukkah x Detroit event.

Eligibility

The competition is open to all: architects, artists, makers, builders, design professionals, and others. No professional qualification is required. Design proposals can be developed individually or by teams (Max 4 team members). Winning designers will be connected with a licensed engineer for certification.

The Challenge

A sukkah is a temporary structure constructed during Sukkot. While building a Sukkah is a Jewish practice with biblical roots, this design competition represents an opportunity for all to reimagine an ancient ritual, and to explore how contemporary variations of the type can sponsor lively activity.

Competition Details

The jury will select 5-7 winners to construct their projects for the first Sukkah x Detroit event. Winning teams will receive a \$10,000 materials/construction budget and \$5,000 design stipend. All submissions will be exhibited inside the Isaac Agree Downtown Synagogue, a featured event of Detroit Month of Design 2018. Winning submissions will also be exhibited through AIA Detroit's Celebration of Architecture and Eastern Market After Dark. A printed catalogue will also support the exhibit.

Entries should challenge the conventional notion of a sukkah while satisfying the biblical requirements for the architectural typology. Finalists will be selected on the basis of:

- Originality, coherence, and clarity of the design
- Constructability/assembly logic: ease of assembly and disassembly on-site
- Performativity, inhabitability, and ability to host programming, including ease of entry and exit



Jury

Abir Ali, The Platform
Melinda Anderson, Design Core Detroit
Patty Boyle, SmithGroupJJR
Jeff Kidorf, Albert Kahn Associates
Tiff Massey, Tiff Massey Studios
Noah Resnick, UD Mercy School of Architecture and Laavu
Anya Sirota, University of Michigan Taubman College and Akoaki

Design Criteria

The design criteria for a traditional sukkah have evolved since biblical times. The Design Requirements section below, translated and annotated by Rabbi Ariana Silverman of Detroit's Isaac Agree Downtown Synagogue, is based on the work of Maimonides, who codified many of these laws in his 12th century work, the Mishneh Torah. It includes all requirements, definitions, and constraints for the Sukkah x Detroit event.

Build Stipend & Recognition

The winning teams will be announced in July 2018. Teams will be responsible for procuring construction materials and/or building prefabricated components. Each team will receive a design fee (\$5,000) and materials/construction stipend (\$10,000). Applicants are responsible for their own travel expenses. All entries will be exhibited at the Isaac Agree Downtown Synagogue, which is adjacent to Capitol Park, and published in a catalogue.

Timeline

May 1, 2018	Competition launches
June 25, 2018	Application deadline
July 2018	Winners announced
September 4-22, 2018	Build period at Capitol Park
September 23-30, 2018	Sukkah x Detroit – Public display
October 1-8	Teardown

Application Materials

Digital submissions only. All applicants may submit 1-5 drawings, maximum of 10 MB in size. Applicants should also submit an artist statement, 250 words maximum. Remove all traces of project authorship from entries, including images and file names. Drawings should be able to be scaled to 24"x24" size to allow for exhibition printing.

Submission Process

Submit all materials at <http://sukkahdetroit.slideroom.com>

Questions

Refer to our [website](#) for frequently asked questions. Additional questions may be sent to sukkahxdetroit@gmail.com. No phone calls.



Additional Information

Detroit's UNESCO Designation: In December 2015, Detroit received the designation of UNESCO City of Design, a recognition bestowed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization on cities demonstrating a legacy of and commitment to creativity as a tool for economic development. Joining 21 Cities of Design (now 30) and 180 Creative Cities across the globe, Detroit is the first and only U.S. city to receive the designation. Member cities are all committed to using design as a tool for economic development, achieving this through strategies that leverage their local culture and assets. Detroit is now part of a network of cities committed to sharing best practices; developing partnerships that promote creativity and the cultural industries; strengthening participation in cultural life; and integrating culture in urban development plans. The designation is both a celebration of Detroit's design accomplishments and a call to place design at the heart of the city's economic agenda, providing a framework for ways design can positively impact the lives of Detroiters today while working toward a sustainable future.

Detroit Month of Design is a citywide celebration of creativity that gathers designers and the greater community to celebrate Detroit's role as a national and global design capital. Every September, partners from across Detroit, from emerging studios to established companies and educational institutions, come together to show off their latest works and ideas. These cross-disciplinary events take place in all corners of the city, highlighting the work makes Detroit a City of Design.

Capitol Park: Originally the site of Michigan's territorial courthouse, Capitol Park became the State of Michigan's first Capitol before later serving as a school, a park, a transit center, and once again a park. The site was also home to Finney Barn, an important stop on The Underground Railroad. Capitol Park is at the center of a dense, mixed-use district in downtown Detroit with restaurants; contemporary neighborhood retail; loft (and micro loft) living; and design, technology, and media offices. It's also home to the city of Detroit's only freestanding synagogue and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit.

At present, the park itself is in transition. A capital redevelopment project is planned for the park in the next few years and a concept design has been created by Public Work of Toronto based on extensive community engagement with neighborhood residents. In advance of the physical redevelopment, amenities have been added to test out design ideas planned for the long-term project and enliven the space before ground breaking.



DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

Dimensions: A sukkah is meant to be a temporary dwelling that replaces one's permanent home for seven days. Therefore, it must be constructed in a way that makes it a viable living space for that period. It must be:

- At least 2' 11" high—you have to be able to sleep and eat in it
- No more than 32 feet high—not to be mistaken with a permanent dwelling
- At least 2' wide and 2' long; for building code purposes, max 120 square feet and for use by no more than 10 people.

The Walls: A sukkah must have at least 3 walls. However, if you have met the overall dimension requirements by having two walls that are at least 2'11" high and at least 2' wide, the third wall can be composed as follows:

- If the two walls are perpendicular to each other, the third wall can consist of: a constructed wall at least 3.5" wide, 10.5" or less of empty space comprising a door between it and one of the other two walls.
- If the two walls are parallel, the third wall can consist of: a constructed wall at least 1'2" wide, 10.5" or less of empty space comprising a door between it and one of the other two walls.
- You have probably noticed that in both cases the requirement is that there is 10.5" or less of empty space between the third wall and one of the other walls. This measurement of "close enough" applies in two other cases:
- If the walls of the sukkah are hung from the roof, they need not reach the ground, provided they end within 10.5" of the ground.
- Further, if the walls are less than 10.5" from the ground, and less than 10.5" from the roof, they need only be slightly over 1'2". Why? With this wall suspended in the middle, the total distance from the ground to the roof still equals 2' 11."

The Partition: From the last example of a wall suspended between two empty spaces, we can infer this wall is more like a partition. This raises the question of how sturdy the wall must be. Maimonides, a Rabbi and Talmudic scholar, provides a useful standard: the partition must be made strong enough that it can withstand normal winds. Maimonides uses the example of a sukkah made between trees—one must fill the space between the branches such that these walls can withstand the wind.

The Roof: A sukkah must have a roof. This does not mean that the sukkah must be in the shape of a rectangle. It simply cannot be in the shape of a triangle. The following alternatives are acceptable:



- A structure with walls slanted inward, as long as it has a flat roof of at least 3.5" in width
- Lifting one side of the triangle at least 3.5" off the ground, such that that 3.5" becomes a "wall" and what was previously touching the ground becomes a slanted roof.
- A round sukkah, as long as a rectangle at least 2' long, 2' wide and 2' 11" tall could fit within it.

The material which covers the roof of the sukkah is called *s'chach*. The *s'chach* reinforces the message that this is an agricultural holiday, and the sukkah is a temporary dwelling. The three requirements for the roof materials are that it must: 1) grow from the ground; 2) be detached from the ground; and 3) not be used for any purpose rather than specifically for *s'chach* after sukkah construction. Maimonides also notes that the *s'chach* should remain at least 2'11" off the ground. The *s'chach* need not touch the walls as long as it extends to within 10.5" of the walls. If a sukkah is created using any of the "alternative shapes" mentioned above, the whole structure must be made of materials kosher for *s'chach*.