

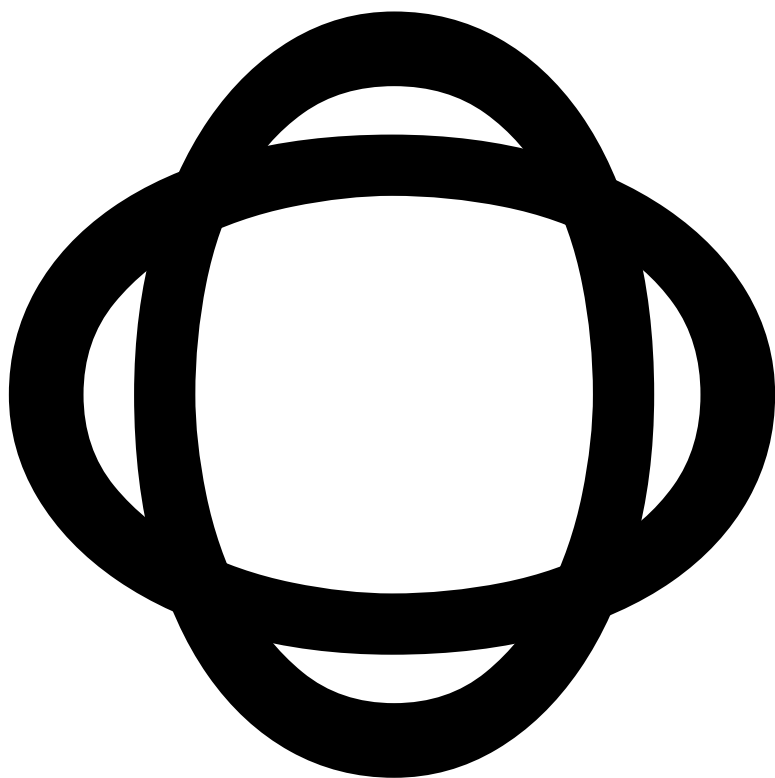
# Open Call

50



**Flanders**  
State of the Art

**TEAM  
VLAAMS  
BOUWMEESTER**



## Content

<b>5001</b>	<u>Ostend – City Hall</u>	<u>7</u>
<b>5002</b>	<u>Herentals – City Reception Hall</u>	<u>17</u>
<b>5003</b>	<u>Knokke-Heist – Broad youth site</u>	<u>27</u>

On the website [www.vlaamsbouwmeester.be/en](http://www.vlaamsbouwmeester.be/en) you can apply for these Open Call projects until Friday, 14 November 2025 , 11 a.m.

The information in this document is for information only. The legally binding information on the projects can be found on the website [www.vlaamsbouwmeester.be](http://www.vlaamsbouwmeester.be). The text of the Dutch project sheets on this website has priority over the text in both the Dutch and the English version of this document as well as on the English version of the projectpages on the website.





# Foreword

Dear designers and clients,

The publication of Open Call 50 marks my first feat as Flemish Government Architect. This 50th edition is an interim milestone, with no fewer than 756 published and 351 completed projects behind us. Along with the international recognition and appreciation of the Open Call as a procedure, the architectural quality and social added value of the completed projects mean that the Open Call is and remains a highly relevant and valuable instrument. I therefore wish to encourage public clients with construction plans to continue to call as much as possible on the Flemish Government Architect and her team in the preparation of their project dossiers and the selection of designers.

This edition includes three projects from local authorities in Ostend, Herentals and Heist-aan-Zee. All three invite designers to translate ambitious agendas and policies into infrastructure projects in the service of staff and residents. Working with the clients, my team refined the programmes in an attempt to maximize social added value.

Public space is an important theme for me. It will be one of the pillars of the ambition statement I will be presenting in a few months. In each of these three projects, architecture and public space are

the subject of one and the same design assignment. When assessing the proposals, I will therefore pay attention in the first place to the design capabilities of architects, public space designers and landscape architects. I look forward to discovering their qualities and references, and I am confident that, in consultation with my team, I will arrive at three strong and diverse selections, as for the projects of the previous 49 editions.

The Open Call holds few secrets for me. As director of spatial development for the city of Genk, I gained a lot of experience with the procedure over the past twelve years. Time and again, we were surprised, as clients, by smart solutions we had not thought of ourselves, or we were given answers for a broader context and problem definition. In my view, this is precisely where the strength of good designers lies: in daring to think critically about the assignments at hand and in using creativity to tackle local challenges.

I wish everyone involved every success and look forward to five exciting years as Flemish Government Architect.

Véronique Claessens, Flemish Government Architect









## OSTEND – ADMINISTRATIVE CENTRE, MARITIME MUSEUM AND LAYOUT OF THE SURROUNDINGS

Preparation of a future vision for a green city foyer and all-inclusive study assignment for the renovation and repurposing of the city hall into an administrative centre and maritime museum with the accompanying layout of the surroundings in Ostend.

### COMMISSIONING AUTHORITY

city of Ostend

### SITE LOCATION

Vindictivelaan 1. Complete city hall site located between Stockholmstraat, Vindictivelaan, Leopold II-laan and Kaïrostraat in 8400 Ostend

### ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION BUDGET (EXCL. VAT AND FEES)

- Architecture: € 40,800,000
- Layout of the surroundings: € 2,500,000

### FEE (EXCL. VAT)

- General fee percentage for the architecture: 12–14%
- General fee percentage for the layout of the surroundings: 7–9%
- The fee for the preparation of the future vision is included in the above percentages.

### AWARD (EXCL. VAT)

€ 20,000 per valid first tender

### SELECTION RESTRICTION

4 selected candidates

### SELECTION GUIDELINES

Download the selection guide for more information about the selection procedure, the grounds for exclusion and the selection and award criteria:

[selection guidelines 5001 Ostend](#)













## Project description

**The city of Ostend wants to transform the current city hall into a single central administrative centre (AC) that centralizes all services for its approximately 72,500 residents. With a view to also turning the location into a public attraction, the city authorities also want to house a new maritime museum on-site. At the same time, the surrounding public space needs to be greened and redesigned. To anchor the project as a whole in the city, the client wants to have a vision for the future drawn up in advance for a green city foyer. The city of Ostend has allocated a budget of € 43,200,000 excl. VAT and fees for this project.**

Ostend is a city with approximately 72,500 inhabitants which annually welcomes more than 450,000 overnight tourists and a multitude of day tourists. That is why the city wants to have an inviting and accessible city hall where every employee, citizen and visitor will feel welcome. Bringing the city administration and a new maritime museum together in one place can generate a new dynamic. An employee can take a break among the museum visitors while a wedding is being performed; a new Ostend resident can register with the city while schoolchildren immerse themselves in maritime life. To ensure the success of the project, the client first wants to draw up a vision for the future of a green city foyer, with the city hall as its focal point.

The modernist city hall has a gross floor area of approximately 15,000 m<sup>2</sup> and was built between 1956 and 1961, based on a design by Victor Bourgeois in collaboration with Ostend architect André-Louis Daniëls. The building was given a prominent place in the renewed city plan that architect and urban planner Jean-Jules Eggericx had drawn up after World War II. He gave the city hall a key position at the intersection of various mobility axes and sightlines.

The visually prominent building consists of a representative wing on Mercatordok and an office wing on Stockholmstraat; these are connected by an intermediate wing. Today, the hard boundaries, fragmented outdoor space, ubiquitous car traffic, parking areas and poor accessibility of the complex mean that the city hall is isolated from the surrounding urban fabric. Moreover, it is underutilized and in need of a thorough renovation.

Fortunately, the beam-column structure allows it to accommodate a new programme.

To draw up the requested vision for the future, the designers must take into account an area that is larger than the city hall site itself, paying attention to various aspects: the creation of a green urban reception area connected to, among other things, Mercatordok, Leopoldpark, Maria Hendrikapark and the small park in Spoorwegstraat; the modal shift; the connection between the different neighbourhoods; the development of a public hub on the axis between Maria Hendrikapark and the Casino-Kursaal. The future vision must provide the city authorities with a starting point for guiding future developments.

While the vision for the future is being drawn up, preparatory studies can already be undertaken for the renovation and redesign of the city hall and the redevelopment of the surrounding public space. Today, the layout of the surroundings is almost entirely geared towards car traffic, with a lot of paving and fragmented residual spaces. Furthermore, the city hall is poorly connected to its immediate surroundings.

The new programme therefore comprises, on the one hand, the AC with the city administration, the city government, the OCMW (Public Centre for Social Welfare) and several other entities which are currently located in different buildings and, on the other hand, the maritime museum. Together, the AC (12,000 m<sup>2</sup>) and the museum (4,500 m<sup>2</sup>) require a total gross floor area of +/- 16,500 m<sup>2</sup>. The area of the entire site is +/- 16,000 m<sup>2</sup>. The way in which the requested programme is accommodated within the existing volume or outside it is also the subject of the research design. With the new AC, the city wants to focus on flexible work in terms of time and space and on centralizing and digitizing its services. The AC must be an accessible place where visitors feel welcome and employees enjoy coming to work.

The museum project highlights the North Sea as a dynamic network of trade and shifts in power throughout the centuries, the role of explorers and the emergence of the blue economy as a contemporary translation of maritime ingenuity. The permanent exhibition (War Heritage Institute heritage collection) will be supplemented with thematic and temporary exhibitions. The museum will work closely with businesses and research





institutions. In this way, it will not only be an interactive cultural beacon, but also an innovation hub for the future of the North Sea. The client has high ambitions: in terms of both content and scenography, the museum wants to measure up to leading foreign institutions. The museum is a place where heritage, technology and social awareness come together.

The renovation and expansion of the city hall must be carried out with respect for its architectural value and with attention to current accessibility, comfort and energy standards. Both the original and more recent office furniture and the materials on-site should be reused as much as possible. The building must also be flexible and adaptable, in terms of time and space. Interaction between the various functions and shared use of space can ensure the optimization of the programme and occupancy, but can also promote social contact. Third parties could also make use of rooms, catering facilities, etc., with attention

being paid to safety. Attention must also be paid to natural light and the connection with the outdoor space.

The challenge for the outdoor space lies in creating a single coherent green zone with room for water and biodiversity, which will mitigate urban warming and provides space for cyclists and pedestrians to both pause on-site and pass through safely. The layout of the surroundings will reinforce the city hall site as a representative and central meeting place for employees, residents and visitors in the dense urban fabric of the city centre and the Oud Hospitaal district.



















## HERENTALS - CITY RECEPTION HALL, UNDERGROUND CAR PARK AND PARK LAYOUT

All-inclusive study assignment for the construction of a city reception hall with underground car park and the expansion and layout of the city park in Herentals

### **COMMISSIONING AUTHORITY**

City of Herentals

### **SITE LOCATION**

Belgiëlaan 7 in 2200 Herentals

### **ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION BUDGET (EXCL. VAT AND FEES)**

- City reception hall: € 9,200,000
- Underground car park: € 7,500,000
- Park layout: € 1,800,000

### **FEE (EXCL. VAT)**

- General fee percentage for the new construction (city reception hall and car park): 10%–12%
- General fee percentage for the layout of the surroundings: 7.5–9.5%

### **AWARD (EXCL. VAT)**

€ 10,000

### **SELECTION RESTRICTION**

4 selected candidates

### **SELECTION GUIDELINES**

Download the selection guide for more information about the selection procedure, the grounds for exclusion and the selection and award criteria:

[selection guidelines 5002 Herentals](#)













## Project description

**The city of Herentals wants to build a new city reception hall on a site on Belgiëlaan, close to and replacing the current reception hall 't Hof.**

**A strategic purchasing policy was pursued to this end in recent years and preparatory studies carried out. This development includes a central public car park to replace the current above-ground car park, with a capacity of 250 cars. A new park area is to be laid out above ground, adjacent to the existing city park. The city has allocated a construction budget of € 18,500,000 excl. VAT and fees for this project.**

The city of Herentals wants to take the next step in the high-quality development of the Schaliken inner area. This fragmented, previously private car park and park area forms the crucial link between the city park and the Grote Markt. Since 2010, the city has been pursuing a strategic purchasing policy with a view to completely upgrading the area. In 2016 a first phase of development took place with the redevelopment of the city park and the construction of a temporary car park.

The master plan for the Schaliken inner area, drawn up by BRUT + LAMA + Talboom, provided at the time for the future further development of the area, mainly with a residential programme. Now, years later, the last properties have been bought up and the vision has changed somewhat. The city wants to energize the area with a new public programme, including, in an initial phase, a new city reception hall with underground car park on Belgiëlaan and, possibly in a subsequent phase, a new city hall (not part of this assignment).

The assignment has by now been extensively researched, in the first instance through the preparation of a programme of requirements via a participatory preliminary process involving citizens, associations and advisory bodies. This programme of requirements was then translated into an urban development study, which outlines the spatial preconditions for the future new public programme. The final part of this study forms the basis for the construction of a next phase during this term of government: a new city reception hall with a central public underground car park and park layout.

The new city reception hall will be multifunc-

tional, with an events hall (1,000 people standing), a multipurpose hall (350 seats) and space for a youth centre. By building it on Belgiëlaan, the current city hall can remain in use until the new one has been built. To this end, the recently purchased property at Belgiëlaan 9 will have to be demolished.

The new city reception hall will be a compact stacked volume, with the halls on the upper floor. A lively base with different entrance areas from different sides of the park will connect the building to the outdoor space. The building should become a representative attraction in the middle of the city park. Where possible, the halls will face the park, but will keep their distance from a planned residential development on the east side. Special attention is needed for the logistical movements associated with the city reception hall, in combination with the logistics of neighbouring businesses.

A new, central public car park with two underground levels and a planned capacity of approximately 250 spaces will be built under the city reception hall and in part under the park. This will be an extension of an existing private underground car park. The entrance and exit for both the new public and existing private car parks will be located internally under the city reception hall. Easy access for residents, users and visitors to the centre is crucial.

The construction of this car park is part of an overall sustainable mobility strategy for the entire city centre and the planned redevelopment of Augustijnenlaan and Belgiëlaan. The parking spaces located along these streets and on the Grote Markt will be clustered in a few strategic central car parks, including the new underground car park beneath the city reception hall.

The area south of the city reception hall will thus become a public car-free green space, with the green zone adjacent to the city reception hall also serving as a venue for small-scale events. The expansion of the city park will be designed in harmony with the existing city park, with biodiverse plants and attention to water collection. The new park should become an attraction for young and old alike. Safe and easy accessibility, gender-neutral design, pleasant seating areas, child-friendly spaces and good lighting should contribute to making it attractive. The new park will connect to the sunken







entrance of the existing cultural centre, the Grote Markt and the Zandstraat shopping street.

The city of Herentals is looking for an ambitious multidisciplinary design team that can take on the all-inclusive study assignment for the construction of a city reception hall with central public underground car park and park layout and accompany the project until the definitive completion, all within a tight schedule.



















## **KNOKKE-HEIST – BROAD YOUTH SITE FORMER FISHERIES SCHOOL**

All-inclusive study assignment for the renovation and repurposing of the former Fisheries School into a broad youth site in Heist, a submunicipality of Knokke-Heist

### **COMMISSIONING AUTHORITY**

Knokke-Heist municipal authorities

### **SITE LOCATION**

Kursaalstraat 55 in 8301 Heist, buildings of the Fisheries School located along Noordstraat

### **ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION BUDGET (EXCL. VAT AND FEES)**

- Architecture: € 5,000,000
- Layout of the surroundings: € 400,000

### **FEE (EXCL. VAT)**

- General fee percentage for the new construction: 11%
- General fee percentage for the renovation: 13%
- General fee percentage for the layout of the surroundings: 7%

### **AWARD (EXCL. VAT)**

€ 10,000

### **SELECTION RESTRICTION**

4 selected candidates

### **SELECTION GUIDELINES**

Download the selection guide for more information about the selection procedure, the grounds for exclusion and the selection and award criteria:

[selection guidelines 5003 Knokke-Heist](#)













## Project description

The municipal authorities of Knokke-Heist want to transform the former Fisheries School of the Flemish Community on Noordstraat in Heist into a site for organized youth work in interaction with well-being and care. The renovation must be conceived in a future-oriented manner in terms of programme, construction and architecture. The municipality of Knokke-Heist has allocated € 5,400,000 excl. VAT and fees for this project, including € 400,000 for the layout of the surroundings.

The reason for the assignment is the deterioration of the current youth site De Korenbloem, home to Chiro Heist and the playground activities. In recent years, a new location was actively sought that could also accommodate broader youth activities as well as the Youth Culture service. Over time, the idea grew to connect leisure and well-being by establishing the 'Huis van het kind' (House of the Child) at the youth site. The former Fisheries School was put forward as the preferred location in this regard. The buildings are centrally located in Heist, on the edge of the green heart. The former school buildings, which are in urgent need of renovation, offer a view of the Kasteeltje of Heist, an eclectic country house that is a listed building. The attendant villa garden is listed as a village view. With this repurposing, the municipal authorities want to breathe new life into the former Fisheries School and let it function as an essential link in the transformation of Heist (Heldentorens, Hoost, Doortocht Elizabetlaan, etc.). The project also demonstrates the commitment of the authorities to concretely facilitate the rejuvenation of the municipality.

The former Fisheries School will become a building where play, meeting, well-being and collaboration are central: a warm and familiar place where all children, young people and their parents can go throughout the year for activities, but also for (preventive) family support. It is a great asset to be able to bring together, in one place, all these different functions (traditional youth work, artistic talent development, holiday activities, after-school support and language development, etc.), organizations (Chiro, Youth Culture service, MAAK, de Wip, primary psychological care, etc.) and target groups (able-bodied and disabled people, from toddlers

to young adults, etc.). This will undoubtedly lead to new and surprising dynamics. The site will be central to an integrated youth policy for the entire municipality that is radically committed to the well-being of every child.

The client wants to preserve the building complex as much as possible and to investigate the possibilities for reusing materials, but is also open to contemporary interventions and extensions given the challenging programme. In part due to its location on the edge of the listed village view, the renovated building will be visually prominent. The municipal authorities are looking for a design team that can develop a robust vision to facilitate various future-oriented programme puzzles, but also create a strong image. Multifunctionality and the shared use of space are important in order to use the building as efficiently as possible, but also to promote cross-pollination between the different organizations. The users of the site, including children and young people, must be involved in the design process. The buildings must give a face, a clear image, to the belief in the young residents and their families. That the infrastructure should be playful and adventurous is beyond doubt. This must be an accessible place where it is pleasant and safe to spend time, in direct relation to the immediate and wider environment. By giving children and young people plenty of space to play freely and safely in this easily accessible site in the heart of the community, this environment will be energized for all generations. The layout of the surroundings must enhance the heritage value of the site and meet the needs and wishes of the broad group of users.

The municipal authorities want to start the works in the spring of 2028, so that the site is fully operational by the summer holidays of 2030.









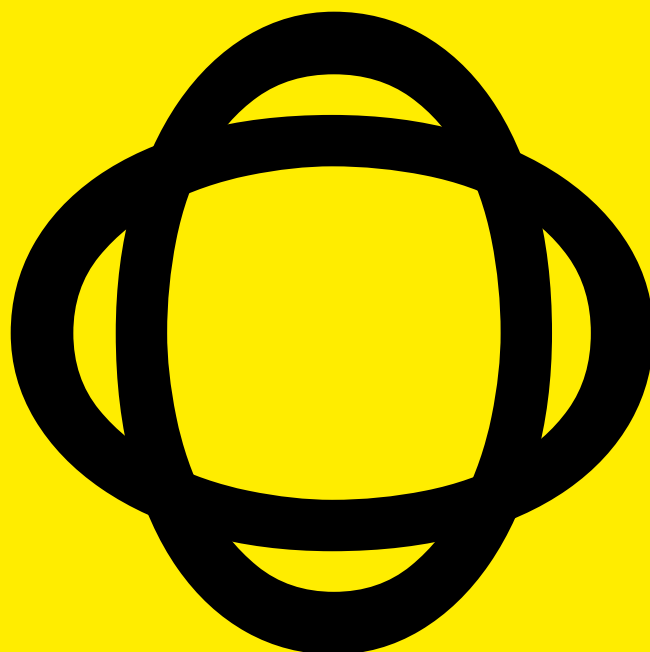












**design**

Raoul Wassenaar  
Team Vlaams Bouwmeester

**photography**

© Isabelle Pateer

**arials**

Digital version of the orthophoto's, mid scale, colour  
© GDI-Vlaanderen

**publisher**

Government of Flanders  
Flemish Government Architect  
Simon Bolivarlaan 17, 1000 Brussel

**more information**

the administration of the Team Flemish Government Architect  
+32 2 553 01 11  
[bouwmeester@vlaanderen.be](mailto:bouwmeester@vlaanderen.be)