



Az Európai Unió  
társfinanszírozásával



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Erzsébetváros

## ENERGY REFURBISHMENT OF THE BETHLEN SQUARE THEATRE IN BUDAPEST AND REMODELING OF THE RECEPTION AREAS

### ARCHITECTURAL IDEAS COMPETITION



The tender is launched by the Municipality of Erzsébetváros, 7th District of Budapest,  
As a beneficiary partner of the LIFEBAUHAUSINGEurope project

Budapest, 25 April 2024



Ez a projekt az Európai Unió Life programja által nyújtott támogatásban részesült a 101113886 számú támogatási megállapodás keretében. A dokumentum tartalmáért kizárólag a BauhousingEurope felelős, és nem feltétlenül tükrözi az Európai Unió véleményét.



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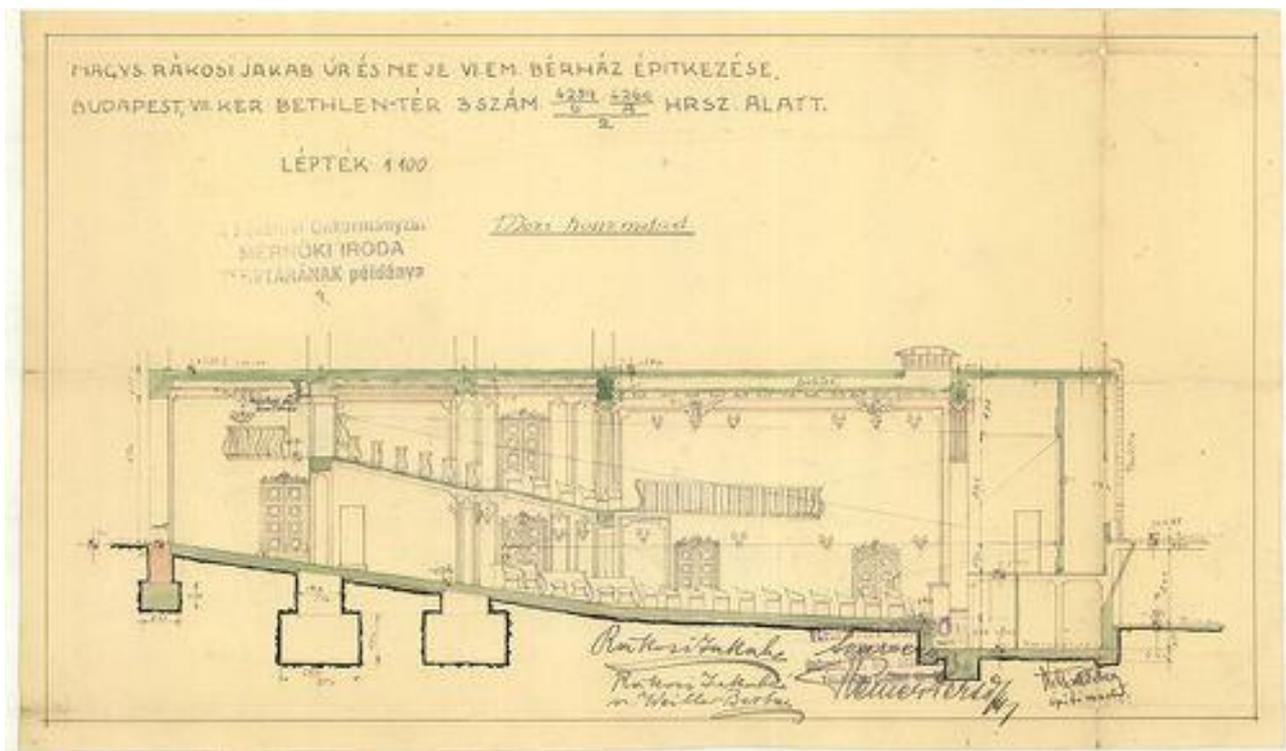
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## Introduction

The Municipality of Erzsébetváros, as the beneficiary partner organization within the framework of the 'LIFEBAUHAUSINGEurope' project, announces an architectural design competition for the renovation of the public reception areas of the Bethlen Square Theatre located at 3 Bethlen Gábor tér, Budapest District VII, registered under land registry number 33292/A/5, including the facades of the associated sections, the enclosed front garden in front of the theatre, and in terms of energy modernization, the entire area of the theatre. According to the property sheet of the theatre, its floor area is 716 m<sup>2</sup>, and its owned by the Municipality of Erzsébetváros, Budapest District VII."

## Description of the Property

The high ground floor + 6-story apartment building located on the northwest side of Bethlen Gábor Square was designed by Dezső Reiner and was built in 1928. The "hundred-apartment tenement" - originally named after its builder, Jakab Rákosi - was also known as Rákosi Courtyard. The ground floor and basement of the right side of the building were originally planned for a cinema, but it eventually opened as a theatre under the name "Bethlen Square Stage."



After nine years, the theatre went bankrupt, and in 1937, it reopened as a cinema under the name 'Hollywood Film Salon.' The cinema function remained until the 1980s, after which this part of the building was once again used as a theatre.



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The entrance to the theatre opens onto István Street. The auditorium, located on the basement level, is accessible from the staircase-designed foyer, which lies beneath one of the inner courtyards of the tenement building. The first-floor apartments of the building are located above the balcony and the originally double-height, gallery-style foyer. Currently, an office area occupies the 'gallery level' of the foyer along the street facade. This feature is to be retained.

Legally, the lane in front of the Bethlen Square facade of the building is part of the property's front garden, originally flanked by a small pavilion on each side, along with an area delimited by stone-based fencing. The left side of the symmetrical layout was demolished after World War II damage, and it is currently used as a car park. The right side, with the 'Clock workshop' pavilion, remains intact. The enclosed front garden is used by the theatre and is considered the design area in this design competition

## Design Guidelines

The architectural character of the tenement building has essentially remained unchanged over the nearly 100 years since its construction, although the building is not protected. The aim of the design competition is not to reconstruct the building's original state but rather to seek innovative architectural solutions that may be contemporary but harmoniously integrate with the building's external and internal character.

The primary goal of the design competition is to enhance the aesthetic and technical aspects of the public reception areas—primarily the foyer, along with the associated cloakroom and buffet—while fostering greater openness towards the external space. The 'opening' can also be facilitated by humanizing the front garden.

It should also be noted that currently and in the future, the barrier-free access of the theatre is only provided through the right-side, outermost door, via the ramp starting from there; however, an accessible restroom has not yet been installed. This must be addressed, accessible from the basement foyer. The restroom serving the audience — located on the balcony level — will naturally remain in its current location, to be modernized, including the staircase leading up to it.

The internal renovation and modernization of the theatre, within the scope of this competition, do not extend to the reorganization of the auditorium, reinstalling stage technology, or redesigning operational and office areas. However, the current 'boundary' between the foyer and the auditorium can be altered, as has been done several times during previous renovations. In this case, the limited foyer area can be expanded.



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The document 'Recommendations from the Bethlen Working Group' is an attachment of the announcement, in which the Local Working Group (LWC) formulated recommendations from the local community. These recommendations should be taken into account.

Another important goal of the design competition is the energy refurbishment of the theatre. However, this issue can only be addressed comprehensively, in relation to the entire area of the theatre. Regarding the external facades, according to urban planning regulations, external thermal insulation cannot be applied, but internal insulation (Multipor) is possible, as well as upgrading the windows. There is a theoretical possibility for insulating the floor and courtyard ceilings. The attached document 'Energy Audit' serves as a guide to understanding the existing building services and lighting systems. The applicant must develop the principles of energy retrofit and conduct calculations for the energy performance of the building after the refurbishment. Based on the document 'HET-1003-2254,' which is the current valid energy certificate, the two states must be compared. It is suggested to achieve a 30% energy saving ratio.

During planning, it is recommended to ensure that the investment does not exceed the planned gross EUR 300,000 maximum cost at current prices, of which EUR 200,000 is allocated for architectural and interior modernization, EUR 90,000 for building service equipment and electrical refurbishment, and EUR 10,000 for the estimated cost of humanizing the front garden.

The recommended scale of the application plans is 1:200, which should include floor plans from different levels, the required number of sections for understanding, and at least one view taken in the foyer and one exterior view from the entrance of the theatre. The project description should address the details of architectural, interior design, and energy refurbishment, as well as energy calculations.

**The application materials (plans, descriptions) must be submitted in Hungarian/English.** The submission format: digitally (in PDF format) and on A/2 size boards. The digital storage device (CD/flash drive) must be unsealed and submitted in a white envelope of A/5 size, labelled 'digital storage device.'

## Eligibility Criteria

The applicant must be under **40 years** old and hold a **degree in architecture**, and must be a private individual with EU citizenship. The competition is confidential; there should be no indication or mark in the documentation referring to the identity of the applicant. The 'Applicant Information' annex must be submitted in a sealed, unmarked, A/5 size white envelope. Companies or legal entities are not eligible to participate in the competition, however members of these companies can apply as private individuals. Entries violating confidentiality will be disqualified.



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## Jury, Awards

The competition will be judged by an international jury. A total of EUR 15,000 gross is available for the best 3 prizes, which will be paid out by the organizer at the current exchange rate in Hungarian forints.

Composition of the jury:

Benedek DLA Sólyom (Chief Architect of Erzsébetváros) – Chairman

Dr. László Váczi (Managing Director of Bethlen Square Theatre) – Member

Attila Lucz (Energy Expert) – Member

Fruzsina Dézsi (Delegated by the BAUHAUSING consortium) – Member

The jury may also award shared prizes. The awarded participants, as compensation for the prize, transfer their rights of use of their designs to the Organizer, meaning that the Organizer can use ideas from their entries without restriction.

## Evaluation Criteria

Architectural quality and innovation

Level of energy efficiency improvement

Consideration of recommendations provided by the Bethlen Working Group (LWG)

Adherence to investment cost limits

Healthy and comfortable spaces: lighting, acoustics, thermal comfort, air-quality

Use of recycled materials

## Deadlines

The submission of applications is done electronically. Applicants can register at the following email address, starting from April 25, 2024, by providing their name, date of birth, address, and email address. The Organizer will send the application materials to the applicants via email in response.

[lifebauhousing@erzsebetvaros.hu](mailto:lifebauhousing@erzsebetvaros.hu)

The Organizer will conduct an on-site visit for the applicants on May 9, 2024, at 10:00 AM. Questions can only be submitted in writing, via email to the above email address, until May 14, 2024. The Organizer will send the answers to all applicants via email by May 23, 2024.

The deadline for submitting applications is July 1, 2024 (23:59). Applications must be submitted by mail, with acknowledgment of receipt, and the deadline refers to the postmark date. Due to



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confidentiality requirements, the following address must be used both as the addressee and as the sender:

**Erzsébetváros Municipality Mayor's Office  
1073 Budapest, Erzsébet krt. 6.  
Budapest VII. District  
Mayor's Cabinet Office**

Planned Date and Location for Announcement of Results:

July 17, 2024, at 13:00, Erzsébetváros Municipality Mayor's Office, 1073 Budapest, Erzsébet krt. 6.

### Attachments:

- Data of Applicant (to be placed in a sealed envelope)
- Recommendations from the Bethlen Workshop (LWG)
- Energy Audit
- HET-1003-2254
- External and internal photos
- Survey floor plans (1989)
- Current auditorium layout plans (with sections)