



# Open Call: Exploring the Impact and Opportunities of AI at BIG

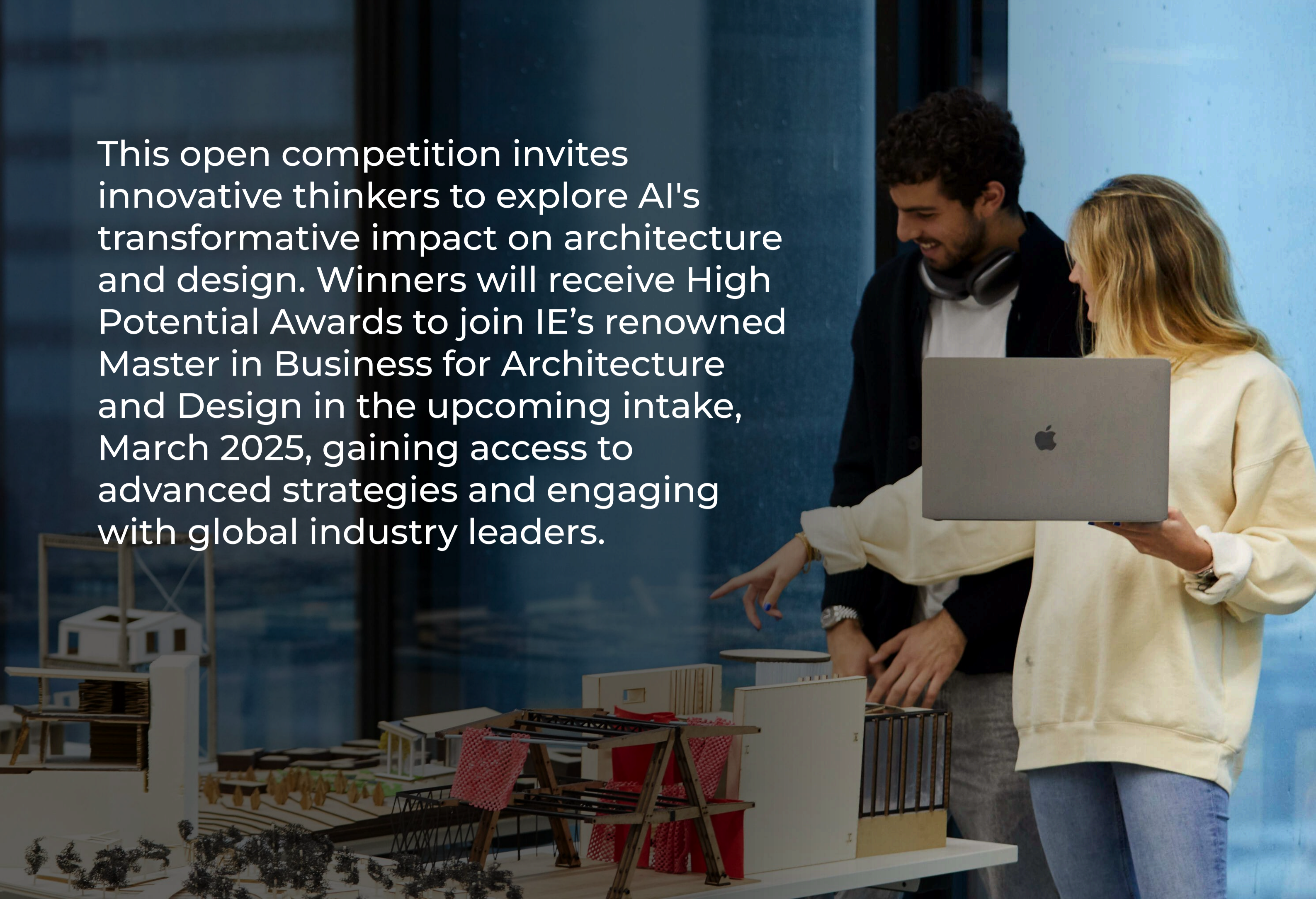
A global competition offering High Potential Awards for the Master in Business for Architecture and Design, in collaboration with Bjarke Ingels Group and IE School of Architecture and Design



By IE School of Architecture and Design,  
in Collaboration with Bjarke Ingels Group



This open competition invites innovative thinkers to explore AI's transformative impact on architecture and design. Winners will receive High Potential Awards to join IE's renowned Master in Business for Architecture and Design in the upcoming intake, March 2025, gaining access to advanced strategies and engaging with global industry leaders.



## 1 | CHANGE, OPPORTUNITY AND AI IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The rise and development of artificial intelligence entails a significant opportunity for the built environment industries, from real estate development, down to construction, manufacturing and design. Yet its adoption is also a challenge for multiple firms, which try to stay competitive and minimize risk as they navigate this transformation, redesigning their creative and production processes as well as their culture and strategies for investment, communication, business development or Human Resources, to name a few. Although many of the technologies involved in AI are still in their early stages, the rapid pace of development and the reference from other industries with faster curves of technology adoption is both showing the path, and revealing the challenges ahead.

Architects play a key role in the value chain of the built environment, not only providing vision, strategy and shape to all types and scales of spaces, but also defining the creative and thinking processes that give birth to these. In the last two decades, the architectural design realm has been, nevertheless, under chronic strain in terms of productivity (the ratio between resource input and revenue output) and profitability, due to multiple factors. The fragmentation of the market, the unpredictable cost and effort of creative processes or the difficulty to transmit the multiple facets of value that good design provides to the built environment stakeholders, become even more challenging when combined with a ubiquitous lack of business and entrepreneurial acumen within the architecture profession. Despite our outstanding amounts of design talent, focus has been traditionally put, more often than not, only on the creative and technical aspects of the profession, leaving the strategic and business ones aside, despite their high influence on design's success.

## 2 | A ONE-OF-A KIND COMPETITION FOR ARCHITECTS AND DESIGNERS

At IE School of Architecture and Design, we are global pioneers in bringing business, entrepreneurship and innovation training to architects. Since the launch of the program in the early 2010's, we strongly believe that business and design are stronger together, and we carry that flag high. The global community that we have built, with alumni currently working in creative leadership positions in more than 50 countries around the world, is the best sign that, then and now, we pointed in the right direction, and is also one of the biggest assets of the program.

IE School of Architecture and Design has partnered with Bjarke Ingels Group –a global reference in design innovation– to empower architects worldwide to put strategic, business and innovation thinking at the center, as key enablers to build more competitive and creative companies, for the benefit of the built environment.

Winners will be selected as the top talent to participate in the Master in Business for Architecture and Design (MBArch).

With up to 40% tuition scholarships among other prizes, this competition will allow change-makers like you, to join a unique 15 months' transformational journey of education to become a better design and business leader.

Joining the program will connect you with other global young leaders, all attending in a hybrid format (online with in-person periods in Madrid and Amsterdam), which brings the best opportunity to combine work, study and a thriving personal life.





### 3 | THE CHALLENGE: ANALYZING THE IMPACT AND OPPORTUNITY OF AI AT BIG

Given the context of change derived from Artificial Intelligence, we invite design and AEC professionals to reflect on the impact that this technology poses for Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG), as a determinant factor to shape the firm's future, as a leader in the global architectural landscape. Participants will conduct a global evaluation of the firm, and assess AI's potential to impact BIG as a company, both bringing strategic opportunities, business improvements and challenges.

As a guiding framework, we provide the following steps and questions, which are open to each participant's interpretation and personal methodology.

As a reference, we estimate that the overall production of the work should not take more than 2 full business days, or a week part-time.

# FRAMEWORK

## Step 1 | A BIG RESEARCH

Conduct thorough research about BIG's strengths, opportunities and business structure: aspects such as the firm's history, works, markets and clients, ethos, design methodology, corporate structure, operations, global footprint of projects and offices, communication strategy, achievements and challenges are all facets of the business that represent basic information to understand the potential of AI.

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Conduct some research to understand the multiple facets in which AI is developing and impacting the architecture world, on the different steps of the value chain and the different factors that play a role in architectural design: from firm's processes such as public relations, business development, financial management, design stages or site supervision, to design factors such as sustainability, design efficiency, data integration or participatory design, to name a few.

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## Step 2 | AI RESEARCH WHAT IS HAPPENING IN AI IN DESIGN RIGHT NOW?

## Step 3 | A BIG PICTURE OF OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS RELATED TO AI

Take some time to reflect on the relationship between Step 1 (BIG's analysis) and Step 2 (development of AI), and where opportunities and threats arise. Present an overview of all the identified connections and references.

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Evaluate what can be prioritized out of step 3, and develop more in-depth. Present a summarized analysis of the Impact of these AI applications in BIG in the next 5 years: what are the opportunities and threats of this technology, in which areas or subjects it can play outstanding roles, why and how?

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## Step 4 | IN-DEPTH AI IMPLICATIONS

## Step 5 | AN AI STRATEGY FOR BIG

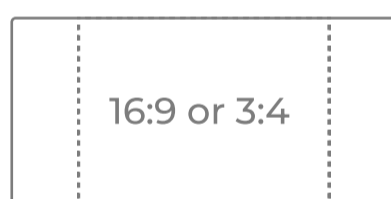
If you held the position of Chief Innovation Officer of BIG, which key actions would you prioritize to maximize opportunities and minimize the threats in the company, and why? What would be your approach to the AI culture at BIG, to keep the team motivated and at the forefront of design.

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## 4 | COMPETITION DELIVERABLES

Deliverables should be sent to (IE email) before the deadline (see point 6).



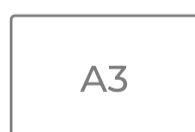
The analysis should be presented in a slides' presentation, in Landscape orientation, 16:9 or 3:4 format.



The file extension should be PDF. All slides should be compiled in a single file.



The maximum number of slides to present is 10, excluding the cover slide. Content can be distributed as desired between the different topics.



The maximum amount of information on each slide, should be equivalent to a printed A3 paper size.



Slides will be evaluated by the jury on a screen of maximum 32".



The content of the slides can include only text, or be mixed with diagrams, pictures, hand drawings or any other form, or combination of forms of representation, as considered appropriate by the participants.



## 5 | EVALUATION CRITERIA

This is NOT a design competition, but a business and strategy competition for designers.

Consequently, while the design aspects remain important, these are only evaluated regarding their contribution to making a more compelling presentation of the case.

The Jury will evaluate the following aspects:

- Capacity of the proposal to address the questions raised on the framework, directly or indirectly.
- Clarity of the presentation.
- Sharpness of the analysis and the strategic proposal and its correspondence to real or plausible impacts of AI in the firm.
- Creativity and originality in the understanding of AI, while keeping in mind that a realistic approach is desired. Anything not plausible by 2030 is not considered relevant for the plan.
- Quality of the documents and respect for the rules. Deliverables missing information, overlooking the format, or incomplete will NOT be considered for evaluation.

## 6 | COMPETITION TIMELINE

Competition Launch: 10th of January 2025, 09:00 CET time.

Deadline for competition entries: 10th of February 2025, 09:00 CET time.

Jury - 1st round (IE Architecture and Design): 11th of February 2025.

Jury - 2nd Round (BIG): 12-13th February 2025

Jury results published: 14th February 2025

Meetings with winners, and prize acceptance: 17th-18th of February 2025

Program Enrollment Deadline: 15th of March, 2025

Master Starts: March 31st, 2025

# 7 | PRIZES

The IE MArch Challenge will award the following prizes to the winners:

## 1ST PRIZE

One (1) 1ST PLACE WINNER will be awarded, consisting of:

Pending admission to IE Master in Business for Architecture and Design program for the 2025–2026 academic year. **Scholarship worth €10,000** towards the program tuition fees.

## 2ND PRIZE

Two (2) 2ND PLACE WINNERS will be awarded, consisting of:

Pending admission to IE Master in Business for Architecture and Design program for the 2025–2026 academic year. **Scholarship worth €5,000** towards the program tuition fees.



Join us on this journey to  
make business and design  
stronger together!