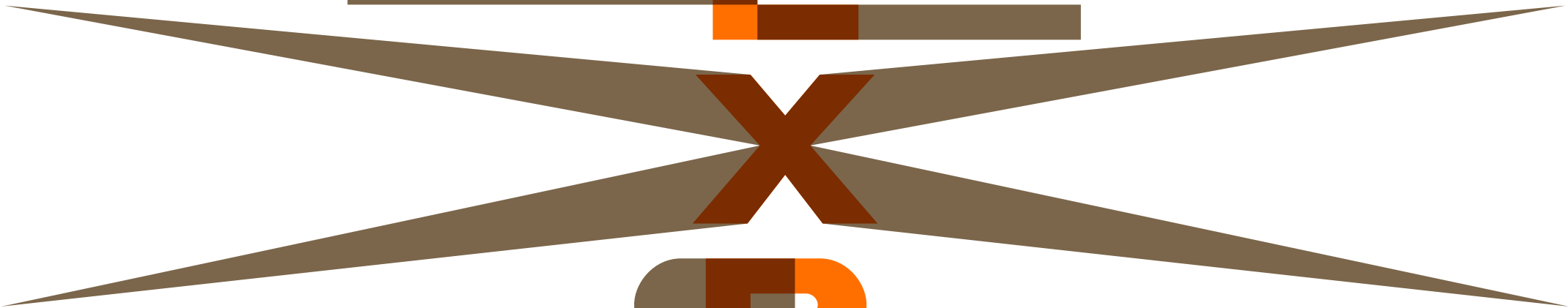


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ZAZ BELLERIVE INVITES ARCHITECTURAL
PRACTICES AND PLANNING PROFESSIONALS
TO SUBMIT THEIR ARCHITECTURAL
EXPERIMENTS.
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 20 SEPTEMBER 2026
FURTHER INFORMATION OVERLEAF
OR AT ZAZ-BELLERIVE.CH

We are looking for your experiments! ZAZ BELLERIVE invites architectural practices and planners to submit their experiments. The selected contributions will form an exhibition on the role of experimentation in architecture in spring 2027. They will be presented over a period of four months and documented with a view to publication.

The submission deadline is 20 September 2026.

Architectural production exists in a constant field of tension between standardisation and innovation. Social, ecological and spatial challenges often evolve more rapidly than regulations can reflect them. The further development of architecture happens where architects and planners examine, stretch or reinterpret existing rules. Experiments are a tool for anticipating, testing and making change visible. Experiments are the condition that allows architecture to respond to new realities. From constructional detail to load-bearing structure, from floor plan development to building services—made visible in the model, the failure or the built result. ZAZ BELLERIVE invites practices and planners to submit their experiments to be exhibited with us in spring 2027.

Submission Contents

Submissions should preferably draw on existing work from the past 5 years (2021–present). The aim is the broadest possible variety of materials: sketches, models, working models, mock-ups, drawings (floor plan, detail, section, site plan, etc.), visualisations, texts, references or audio–visual media.

Each submission is defined as a package as follows:
The submission of the experiment may comprise a total of 3 to a maximum of 5 diverse media. The choice of media is open. A medium may be: sketch, visualisation, construction section, floor plan, MP4, MP3, model, mock-up, etc.

Exemplary media for an experiment:
1 x construction section
1 x image/visualisation
1 x sketch
1 x material sample

Should models or mock-ups be available for exhibition, we kindly ask that a photograph be included with the digital submission. The aim is not a comprehensive representation of the project, but rather a focus on the experimental element/approach/component.

Furthermore, we ask for written answers to the following three questions:

- Ⓐ What makes the submission an experiment?
- Ⓑ What is the relationship between the experiment and an existing norm or common practice?
- Ⓒ Free-text field for: What is the result, the insight, and to what extent can it remain relevant for architectural production or the construction sector? To what extent did the experiment succeed or fail?

The submission is to be assigned to the following categories. A combination of up to three different categories is possible.

- ① Floor Plan
- ② Load-Bearing Structure
- ③ Façade
- ④ Material
- ⑤ Building Services
- ⑥ Text/Theory/Thesis
- ⑦ Failure/Fuck-Up
- ⑧ Own Category (please specify)

All submissions must be provided on a maximum of 5 A3 pages.
A completed data sheet including project details, categories and answers to the three questions must be included with the submission. The template is available via QR code.



Dates and Jury Process

The deadline for submissions is 20 September 2026.

Submissions will be treated confidentially until the opening night. This allows for the submission of ongoing projects, which will only be made public at the opening.

Experiments will be reviewed by a jury. The jury reviews all submitted entries, makes a curatorial selection and recognises the strongest experiment in each category. The jury is composed as follows:

Pascal Angehrn, Baubüro in Situ
Ron Edelaar, EMI Architekt:innen
Tamino Kuny, Architect and Urban Researcher
Charlotte Malterre-Barthes, RIOT EPFL
Roxane Noëlle, Curation ZAZ BELLERIVE
Grace Prince, Designer and Material Researcher
Jan de Vylder, architecten Jan de Vylder
Inge Vinck / A JDVIV (BE)
Margarida Waco, gta/ETH Zurich

Submission materials may be sent to the following email address:
experimente@zaz-bellerive.ch
Enquiries: runterberger@zaz-bellerive.ch

: What does the experiment mean for architectural production?

Architecture has always moved within a field of tension between standardisation and innovation. Today, statutory standards, building regulations and technical guidelines ensure the quality and functionality of buildings on the one hand.
On the other hand, social needs, spatial requirements, technological possibilities and, above all, ecological challenges evolve far more rapidly than regulations can reflect them. This gives rise to points of friction: norms that were once meaningful come into conflict with contemporary developments and demands.

: So does the further development of architecture depend on attempts, risks, experiments, trial and error in order to find answers to these developments?

I think the further development of architecture happens most strongly where existing rules are examined, stretched or called into question. This does not necessarily involve breaking the rules, but it can. Patterns of interpretation also play a significant role in this.
I regard this spectrum between rule and the breaking of rules as a springboard for architectural innovation. The experiment can be seen as a tool in this context—to anticipate change, to test it, to make it visible and to drive it forward.

: In which areas?

In almost all of them; beginning with questions of architectural expression, materialisation and load-bearing structure. But also the organisation of a working group, floor plan typologies, building services. And ultimately what I would call “constructive disobedience”.

: Indeed, Swiss architectural practice continues to be characterised by a strong influence on the part of the designing architects, who bring their experience to bear on constructional details.
This is evident in an architecture of idiosyncrasies, which has historically distinguished itself through deviation from standard solutions and a high degree of craft-based innovation.

Yes, and I think that is only possible when solutions and standards are continually questioned. I would argue that these moments are largely initiated and stimulated by practice—it is, so to speak, the very condition that allows architecture to respond to new social realities.

: On the subject of questioning: how would you concretely define an experiment?

Is there only one definition?... What seems important to me is to regard the experiment as a resistant—indeed subversive—element.

: But then I ask myself: what is the difference between an experiment and an attempt?

Good question. There probably needs to be a hypothesis, an intention, a framework. The element of failure is intrinsic to it. Perhaps an experiment does not merely aspire to do something differently, but to show and prove that it is better that way. To put that to the test.

: That still doesn’t answer the question.

You’re right. It is... It is neither a strictly scientific process nor mere improvisation. To put it another way: I think the aspiration of the experiment is perhaps a practice that carries a question or assumption—sometimes explicit, some times implicit. And that produces a gain in knowledge which—and this may be the crux of the matter—can go beyond the individual building. I think an experiment must succeed in showing that there has to be the courage to break rules with an open end, in order to advance architecture.

: So it has a catalytic effect on architectural production?

In the ideal case, yes—but that is probably a very high expectation.

: Would it be more precise to say: not the courage to break rules, but the courage to embrace ambiguity—the open end, the unsecured? The experiment in architecture, then, in a certain sense as a “hermeneutic undertaking”?

[laughs] I like that. As an act of interpretation. As an attack on patterns of interpretation that have become entrenched through regional conditions.

: The experiment would therefore not primarily be an attack on the formal norm, but on the pattern of interpretation.

Both. It can be both. I would venture: it becomes an experiment through the combination of intention and uncertainty. That is to say: there is an assumption—“if we interpret it this way, it will function better”—but the outcome is not guaranteed. There is a risk, a stake. Someone had to be convinced, something had to be defended, something was on the line...

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