The Green Hub: A resilient vision for Thessaloniki, Greece

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Design professionals in the fields of Architecture and Landscape Architecture

Current global and local environmental issues create significant challenges and opportunities for existing cities worldwide. Creative designs are needed to address them and provide roadmaps for successful redevelopments.

The Green Hub presents a vision plan for the resilient redevelopment of the western waterfront in Thessaloniki, Greece, one of the most vulnerable cities to climate change in the Mediterranean. The site is exposed to flood risks, high temperatures and increasing frequency of storm events. Once a natural landscape with beaches, streams, and a popular waterfront park, the site’s subsequent industrial uses left a polluted waterfront with underused historic buildings.

The Green Hub is a contemporary take on the area’s natural past, proposing waterfront re-activation through resilient design. The project includes the adaptive re-use of the industrial buildings and new public and private spaces, surrounded by plazas and parks. The design echoes the landscapes of Greece, creating a hybrid between architecture and open space that respects the scale of the city.
Bridging architecture and landscape design, the project sets an example of sustainable coastal activation while protecting the area from sea level rise. It implements a series of resilience strategies that mitigate coastal food risks, filter and detain stormwater, restore native ecosystems, prioritize pedestrians and cyclists and promote renewable energy. The larger masterplan proposes restoration of the adjacent river and wetlands, creates activated green pockets within the city fabric and introduces localized stormwater management systems.

The Green Hub’s continuous open space framework enhances a sense of equity and well-being while raising environmental awareness. It establishes a new, vibrant, sustainable and resilient destination for Thessaloniki that functions both as civic space and flood infrastructure, protecting large areas of the city from the rising waters.

Developed in response to the International Architectural Competition “ArXellence 2”, the proposal received 2nd Prize.

Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

**Sofia Nikolaidou** is a landscape and architectural designer based in the Bay Area. Through her design work she aspires to bring aesthetic sensibility in ecological debates as a way to shape and strengthen the relationship between people and landscape. She holds a Master of Landscape Architecture Degree from the University of Pennsylvania, a Diploma in Architectural Engineering from the National Technical University of Athens, Greece and has completed an exchange study at the Architecture School of the University of Florence, Italy. She has been awarded the ASLA Student Certificate of Honor for Outstanding Potential For Contribution to the Profession, the Laurie D. Olin Prize in Landscape Architecture for Design Excellence in the Making of Urban Spaces, and the Olin Partnership Work Fellowship. Her designs have won numerous distinctions in international architectural competitions. She has worked for architecture and landscape firms in Europe and in the USA and is currently a design team member of Meyer Studio Land Architects (MSLA) in Berkeley, California.

**Angeliki Tzifa** is an architectural designer based in New York City. She received a Master of Science in Advanced Architectural Design from the University of Pennsylvania and worked as a research and teaching assistant at the School of Design. She graduated amongst the top of her class and received the prestigious “ADD Prize in Design Excellence” award upon graduation. She also obtained a Bachelor in Architecture from the University of Patras in Greece. She has participated in several exhibitions. Most notably her work was featured in the 2018 Venice Biennale in the “Time Space Existence” exhibition, for a proposed architectural response to public surveillance and the physical application of data. Angeliki has worked for architectural offices in the US and Europe. She is now a part of the Architectural team at CetraRuddy, focusing on large scale mixed use projects.