

Festival des Cabanes

Call for proposals for the Festival des Cabanes 2026

ARTICLE 1: Presentation of the Festival des Cabanes and the call for proposals

Founded in 1666 by Louis XIV, the French Academy in Rome is a French institution located, since 1803, in the Villa Medici, a 16th century villa surrounded by a seven-hectare park on Mount Pincio in the heart of Rome.

The French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici is launching the fourth edition of its Festival des Cabanes, to be held in May 2026 in its historic gardens, and is initiating an architecture competition to mark the occasion.

Conceived as a laboratory for the creation of contemporary microarchitectures, or architectural matter, the Festival des Cabanes presents projects, huts, prototypes and architectures that question the challenges of habitat and assert a strong ecological and environmental conscience. A highlight of Villa Medici's summer program, the Festival des Cabanes (paid admission open from 10am to 7pm) welcomes over 30,000 visitors each year, and becomes the venue for concerts, performances, readings and workshops.

The project selected at the end of this international contest will be exhibited in the remarkable garden of the French Academy in Rome - Villa Médicis, which boasts a rich arboreal heritage and incredible biodiversity, and more specifically in the squares or *quadrati* (green bower surrounded by hedges with a surface area of around 350m²).

The aim of this call for projects is to select a laureate team from an international competition to design, produce and build their hut that will be presented at the Festival des Cabanes 2026 (May - October 2026).

ARTICLE 2: Eligible projects

The competition is open to French and foreign architects, artists, designers and landscape architects of all ages and nationalities.

Group applications are accepted (architects' studios, design offices, builders, design studios or landscape architects) but there must be a single legal entity leading the project.

Applicants must present an original project, created by them, as well as an *in situ* proposal complying with the specifications.

Applicants may submit projects of any type for the historic *quadrati* (squares) of the Villa Medici, including temporary installations, micro-architectures, proto-habitats and prototypes. Each candidate may submit a project for one of the six *quadrati* of their choice. The *quadrati* will be allocated according to the project received and the Festival's artistic direction.

Exhibited in the open air for five months, these structures must be made mainly from re-used or eco-friendly materials, within the framework of an eco-responsible approach. The project will offer the public a new experience of the gardens of Villa Medici, and will encourage us to rethink the question of modular and sustainable housing, as well as our relationship with nature.

The works and designs must be original works designed for outdoor spaces, installed on the ground, floating, perched or on stilts. As projects are open to the public, applicants must ensure that their projects are accessible and secure for visitors.

ARTICLE 3: Funding

The budget for the project is a maximum of €20,000 including tax (twenty thousand euros incl. VAT) for the production and a maximum lump sum of €5,000 including tax (five thousand euros incl. VAT) for expenses.

3.1. Production budget

The winning team will have a production budget of €20,000 including tax (twenty thousand euros incl. VAT) to design, produce and complete their project. The budget must include a 15% margin for contingencies, the cost of raw materials and other services (including return transport, set-up and dismantling costs, hiring an engineer if the team does not include an engineer). This budget is not fungible.

3.2. Fees

The winning team will receive a lump sum of €5,000 including tax (five thousand euros incl. VAT) to cover the costs associated with its participation (inter alia, transport, accommodation and per diem for location scouting, set-up and dismantling). This budget is not fungible.

The fees of other employees involved from time to time must be included in the production costs.

3.3. Supplementary financing

Teams may supplement this budget with an external contribution in currency, skills from a partner clearly identified in the project and previously approved by the Academy at the time of the project selection.

ARTICLE 4: Submission and receipt of applications

Applications must be submitted online by Friday 20th of June 2025 at 18:00 (Paris time) on the Academy's application platform, which can be accessed at the following link: <http://festivalcaban.es.villamedici.it>

Submission of an application implies acceptance of these rules and signing of the assignment of rights agreement attached to these conditions.

All applications submitted are confidential. Access to them is limited to the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici and the selection jury.

4.1. Content of the application file

The submitted application must include:

- **Portfolio and detailed CV of the team:** the team make-up, a presentation of the major projects in which the members of the team have participated;
- **Presentation of the project:** a detailed document presenting the brief and concept for the hut, images and 3D visuals as well as graphic elements - sketches, models and/or preparatory drawings of the project – the applicant may add links to any videos or films related to the project - (maximum 3 pages);
- **Technical note on the project:** a detailed document presenting a site plan, plans, sections and elevations, 3D visuals, a list of the materials envisaged, a provisional assembly schedule indicating its duration, the make-up of the team and its phasing (5 pages maximum);
- **A provisional budget:** as applicable, the budget may include additional sponsors and mention sponsorship in kind;
- **Proof of identity:** for each member of the team;
- **Supporting documentation from the agency, studio, association or collective:** proof of legal status.

Documents must be written in French, Italian or English and submitted in A3 horizontal format with a cover page showing the name of the project, the name of the team, a visual reference and the title of the document. They must be uploaded in PDF format to the dedicated application platform, after completing the online application form. By sending in your application, you are making a firm commitment that you will be available for all stages of production and to take part in the Festival des Cabanes if your application is selected.

The registration for the competition is free.

4.2 Screening of application for eligibility

After the closing date of the call for proposals, the applications will be examined to check that they are eligible and meet the conditions required by these rules.

Only complete applications that meet the requirements of these conditions will be considered. Any untrue statement will automatically render the application invalid.

If necessary, applications may be pre-selected.

ARTICLE 5: Specifications

Candidate projects must comply with the specifications set by the Academy:

- The project must be proposed for one of the Academy's *quadrati*, for which plans and technical data sheets are provide in the appendix;
- The work must be original;
- The structure must be made primarily of eco-responsible and/or recyclable materials;
- The project must blend into the landscape and ecological environment of the Villa Medici gardens;
- The project must be accessible to the public and comply with European safety standards;
- The project must be presented on a turnkey basis and include the budget, a detailed timetable for execution and assembly, and a list of any suppliers and providers;
- Funding must cover the costs of research, design, implementation and transport to and from the site;
- The team must agree to monitor all phases of the research, design and implementation of the project;

Candidate projects must also consider the following constraints:

- The Academy is located on a listed historic site whose gardens are protected: a safety distance of 80 cm from hedges and plants must be respected;
- The soil is archaeologically rich and has many roots: no foundations may be laid;
- Electrical access is limited (maximum power 5KW). In addition, to comply with Villa Medici's sustainable development policy, electrical access will only be possible for assembly and dismantling operations;
- Villa Medici does not have any storage space;
- Access and gauges for lorries and transport are restricted. It is also mandatory to use distribution plates for heavy goods vehicles;
- Villa Medici is located in Zone 3 for wind (27m/s, i.e. 46daN/m2).

ARTICLE 6: Selection of the project

6.1. Selection calendar

Once the applications have been received, the jury will examine them in July 2025.

Based on these submissions, the jury will select the laureate team, which will be invited to visit Rome in July/ August 2025 to refine its design for the hut.

However, the Academy reserves the right to modify the selection schedule for the laureate team and will ensure that candidates are properly informed.

6.2. Selection of the laureate team

The jury will deliberate and select the laureate team by consensus. If there is no consensus, the chairman of the jury has the casting vote.

The jury is under no obligation to designate a laureate, or even to award a project, if the quality of the works submitted is not deemed to meet the requirements of the call for projects. If the jury deems it appropriate, it may exceptionally select an additional team.

The jury's decision is sovereign. Its deliberations, which are confidential, may not be contested or appealed against in any way whatsoever by the candidates. Furthermore, the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici will not be in a position to comment on the jury's choices.

The names of the members of the winning team will be announced individually, in the press and on the website of the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici.

6.3. Composition of the jury

Under the chairmanship of the Director of the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici, the jury is composed of representatives of the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici and qualified personalities.

The jury may seek the opinion of outside experts as necessary. They must undertake to avoid any situation of conflict of interest with any of the candidate teams.

ARTICLE 7: Indicative calendar for the production of the laureate team's project

The laureate team's project will be produced according to the following indicative calendar :

- **Pre-configuration phase: July - September 2025.** This prospective development phase of the proposed project will determine its feasibility and timetable for completion.
- **Production phase: November 2025 - February 2026.** This phase will see the cabane go into production.
- **Assembly and construction phase: April - May 2026.**
- **Dismantling phase: October 2026.** All these phases will be monitored by the laureate team.

ARTICLE 8: Selection criteria

The selection criteria will be based on the following aspects:

- Compliance with specifications;
- Originality of the project and innovation;
- Choice of eco-responsible materials;
- Turnkey project;
- Consideration of the relevance of projects, their feasibility and the possibility of completing them;
- The project's integration into the environment;
- Integrity and coherence of the construction.

ARTICLE 9: Contract between the project leader and the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici

A contract, for which a template is attached, must be signed between the project leader responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the project, on behalf of the laureate team as a whole, and the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici.

ARTICLE 10: Relationship between the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici, the laureate team and their project

It should be highlighted that no hierarchical relationship of any kind will be established between the laureate team and the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici. It will in no way be considered the employer of the laureate team.

Notwithstanding, the laureate team will be required to work closely with the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici and to take into account the constraints inherent in the management of a French public institution.

ARTICLE 11: Communication activities relating to the laureate teams

The French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici and the project partners are authorised to use the laureate teams' name, biography, personal data and views regarding the results of the laureate team's project for communication purposes in any medium necessary.

ARTICLE 12: Intellectual property rights

Unsuccessful applicants and the laureate will retain the intellectual property rights to the projects submitted under the call for proposals.

In the event of selection, the Cabane is the property of the candidate, who must ensure its dismantling, return transport and, if necessary, its itinerancy or destruction.

ARTICLE 13: Automated processing and data protection of applicants' personal data

Applicants authorise the follow-up of their application and to the use of their image and name under the conditions specified below:

13.1. Use of data provided by applicants

Applicants authorise the follow-up of their application and acknowledge that they have been informed that the obligatory personal information concerning them is necessary for their application to this call for projects, may be processed automatically and will be used by the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici exclusively for the purposes of the call for proposals. The personal data obtained from each applicant, both during the application process and during the implementation of the project, are subject to the provisions of the French Data law known as “Informatique et Libertés” (Information Technology and Civil Liberties) of 6 January 1978, as amended, and to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

13.2. Applicants' rights to their data

Applicants have the right to access, rectify, modify, limit, delete and port their personal data. They also have the right to refuse the processing of their personal data, including the right to object to the processing of such data for commercial prospecting purposes. Applicants may also exercise their right to lodge a complaint with the French data protection agency (CNIL).

ARTICLE 14: Suspension, cancellation or postponement of the call for proposals

The French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici reserves the right to modify the current conditions or to suspend, cancel or postpone the call for proposals organised, at any time and without prior notice, if circumstances so require or for reasons beyond its control, without it being held responsible and without any prejudice or loss of opportunity for the applicant.

In this case, no legal, extrajudicial or other activity may be initiated by the applicants against the French Academy in Rome – Villa Medici.

ARTICLE 15: Final provisions

These rules are drawn up in three languages (French, English and Italian). In case of discrepancy when interpreting between the original French version of these rules and the English and Italian translations, the French version will prevail.

ANNEX / APPENDIX

Plans, data sheets, visuals of the *quadrati*, visuals of previous editions
Contract template