

# HELSINKI (FI)

## Eastern Archipelago - responsible recreation

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**Team representative:** architect, landscape architect  
**Location:** Helsinki Eastern Archipelago  
**Population:** City 658,864 inhabitants  
 Greater Helsinki Area of Helsinki 1 320 000 inhabitants  
**Reflection site:** 68 ha + 13 ha + 4 ha + 4 ha + 16 ha  
**Project site:** 8 ha + 7 ha + 2 ha + 1 ha + 6 ha  
**Site proposed by:** City of Helsinki  
**Actors involved:** City of Helsinki

**Owner of the site:** City of Helsinki  
**Commission after competition:** Further studies on the level of concept and landscape design; goal of implementing a project at one or more of the pilot islands.

Oblique photo (c) Helsingin kaupungin aineistopankki / 110th Street Productions, other photos (c) Helsingin kaupunki, kaupunkimittauspalvelut



Photo (c) Helsingin kaupunki, Sofia Kangas



Vartiosaari



Villinki



Malkasaari



Kotiluoto



Pikku Niinisaari

### INHABITED MILIEU'S CHALLENGES

There are more than 700 islands and islets in Helsinki. The presence of an archipelago next to a capital city is a rarity also internationally. Helsinki's eastern archipelago is a unique maritime milieu with valuable natural and cultural-historical sites and varying landscapes, from the sheltered inner archipelago to the barren and open outer archipelago. The public recreational use of the eastern archipelago has so far been low compared to the number of islands and the extent of the area. Two of the main challenges has been poor accessibility and the lack of services, and the vicious circle formed by them. Private boating or canoeing is often the only way to access the area's public recreational islands. In addition, there are few public jetties or other places suitable for landing. The changing seasons and weather conditions add challenges for accessibility.

The new landing sites and related structures, constructions and buildings for maritime recreation will be an essential part of promoting the general recreational use of the archipelago and improving its services and accessibility. Five islands that are topical from the point of view of planning and implementation have been chosen as pilot sites. The challenge is to improve the recreational use of the area while repairing the damaged and worn out natural areas and enhancing biodiversity. Landing sites should also be social meeting places where various modes of movement meet and different user groups share the same areas and functions, benefitting from their closeness.

Building on islands and in other coastal areas creates challenges for the proposed structures. They should be easily transported, implemented and standardised. Simultaneously, the proposal should enhance the values and characteristics of different islands while providing a holistic solution for the recreation in the eastern archipelago.

# HOW TO IMPROVE THE SERVICES AND ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ARCHIPELAGO WHILE CONSIDERING THE CHARACTERISTICS OF LOCAL CULTURE AND NATURE?

# HOW TO ENCOURAGE THE CITY RESIDENTS & VISITORS TOWARDS MORE RESPONSIBLE MARITIME RECREATION BY MEANS OF ARCHITECTURE AND NEW STRUCTURES, CONSTRUCTIONS, BUILDINGS AND SERVICES?



## QUESTIONS ASKED TO THE COMPETITORS

Besides the docks and jetties needed for archipelago boat traffic, small boats, paddlers and rowers, other elements need to be located within the vicinity of the landing sites include: cafes, kiosks, saunas, barbeque shelters, fireplaces and firewood storages, toilets and waste containers, and equipment to routes and trails such as info boards, signs, fences and duckboards. The goal of the competition is to design a modular concept and an architectural system for these diverse elements which can be easily adapted to various sites and situations, and can be tested on seven different kinds of pilot sites. The construction of the elements should be flexible and simple enough in order to be easily expandable and relocatable.

The elements must be of a high-quality architecture, distinctive, and reflect the spirit of the Helsinki archipelago and the islands' values and special features, bringing the necessary services to those islands that are best suited for it. The keywords are: flexibility, scalability, repeatability and adaptability over time, experimentation and testing, economic and ecological sustainability and cost-effectiveness. Natural, cultural, social, and historical values, as well as other special features of the islands, must be taken into account. Sustainable and low-threshold recreation, accessibility, off-grid solutions for infrastructure, archipelago maintenance and urban metabolism are also to be considered. Summertime is the main season but, for example, barbecue places and saunas could also be used in the wintertime on the islands, which can be reached by pontoon bridge or over the ice. The increasing number of visitors to nature sites requires responsible methods of operation and activities that support sustainable recreational use. How can a vulnerable and sensitive nature and landscape be protected from wear caused by recreational use? How can recreational structures guide visitors of different skill levels to act responsibly on the islands and increase their environmental awareness?

