

OPEN CALL

CONTEXT

Bauhaus of the Seas Sails

ART & DESIGN

RADICAL WATERS – CONCRETE MATTERS

FUNDED BY



PARTNERS



CONTEXT OF THE RESIDENCY PROGRAMME

Radical Waters – Concrete Matters

GENERAL CONTEXT

BAUHAUS OF THE SEAS SAILS

The 'Bauhaus of the Seas Sails' is a pioneering project within the New European Bauhaus, conceptualizing it as a triangle of sustainability, inclusion, and designcreativity always locally grounded. 'Bauhaus of the Seas Sails' is an interdisciplinary, intergenerational, and interspecies movement focused on reimagining our relationship with nature in coastal cities and communities, aiming to promote healthier oceans, seas, and other bodies of water. 'Bauhaus of the Seas Sails' encompasses a consortium of 18 academic, cultural, and territorial partners located in 7 European cities (Malmö, Venice, Genoa, Lisbon, Oeiras, Hamburg, Rotterdam) with distinct aquatic ecosystems: estuary, lagoon, gulf, strait, river, and delta. The consortium's main objective is to demonstrate how a co-design and culturally-led process can generate innovative and concrete proposals that address critical environmental and social challenges. In Portugal, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, through CAM – Centro de Arte Moderna Gulbenkian, is the Cultural Partner for the implementation of 3 pilot projects developed in collaboration with the municipalities of Lisbon and Oeiras and Instituto Superior Técnico. These innovative projects, entitled *A Call to the Sea* – Ocean literacy, *Eating Between Tides* – a Regenerative Menu, and *Radical Waters – Concrete Matters* – Blue Makerspace, aim to provide an interdisciplinary understanding of how we can contribute to a more conscious sustainable future, through a public program of activities, artistic and scientific residencies, and art exhibitions in cultural spaces.

LISBON & TAGUS ESTUARY

Founded in the middle of the 13th century, Lisbon is one of the oldest capitals in the world and the most westerly in Europe. It is the only one to be situated on both the Atlantic coast and the northern bank of the Tagus River. Unlike most large cities, the boundaries of the city coincide with those of the municipality, covering an area of approximately 100.05 km². The Lisbon metropolitan area includes several administratively defined towns and municipalities, such as Oeiras on the north bank of the Tagus.

Lisbon has been shaped by the Tagus and the ocean through a waterway. This junction is the context and the starting point of the Lisbon's BoSS project — Mar da Palha — a small Mediterranean on the Atlantic coast, where the city has grown linearly along the shore. This urban area has recently gained significance in Lisbon, as a strategic development territory, with an experimental dimension. It is characterized by a blend of historic industrial architecture, new creative industries and activities with strong technological potential and economic viability, but still observing a detachment from the remaining city. Despite its proximity to the Tagus River, connections are limited, creating tangible and intangible barriers between communities. On its southern edge, a nature reserve has been created – Reserva Natural do Estuário do Tejo.

More than 600 years ago, the Maritime Strategy was Portugal's central public policy designed to help grow the economy. Today, in a new blue economy phase, Lisbon is committed to the 2030 Agenda and reconnecting with the sea and river. At the beginning of the XX century, the access to most of the 19 km of the northern riverside and almost all the southern riverside, was closed to the population and used only for docking, ship repair, oil pipeline and loading and unloading terminals. This has not only affected the environmental quality of the Tagus River, highlighting the biophysical characteristics of the Tagus estuary as one of the largest marine and riverine areas in Europe and one of the most ecologically valuable but has also conditioned the relationship between the inhabitants of Lisbon and the river. However, since the last decade, Lisbon has had an ongoing comprehensive environmental regeneration programme. The culmination of this programme is the strengthening of the relationship between the city and the river, in a process of rediscovery of its relationship and history with the Tagus.

ABOUT THE RESIDENCY

The two Lisbon pilots for the *Bauhaus of the Seas Sails* project are anchored on research focused on the Mar da Palha - the Tagus estuary. Spanning approximately 32,000 hectares and ranging from 2km to 15km in width, it is considered one of the largest in Western Europe. Its historical narrative can transport us back to the Islamic World, between 714 and 1147, when present-day Lisbon was described as a realm between the marvellous and the extraordinary, blessed by a river. The river's wealth was reflected in both the fertility of the fields, which allowed for two crops per year and the discovery of gold nuggets and flakes in its banks when the tide receded. This led to its name "Sea of Straw," derived from "Straw of Gold". A land of many inlets and alluvial farmlands, a coastal region encompassing a diverse assortment of materials linked with the geopolitical dynamics of the area, which have shaped the landscape morphology and interactions among people – such as the remnants of silica, glass, and clay industries, or those more recent associated with salt marshes, saltworks, naval yards, cement factories, and ship container depots along the shoreline. All these factors contributed to an archaeology of sediments that impact the area, affecting both marine flora and fauna.

Undoubtedly, water serves as one of the most crucial elements connecting us, yet it also plays a significant role in the unpredictable climate crisis. From issues impacting coastal cities with floods, droughts, and pollution to broader concerns affecting thousands of people, those who haven't directly experienced these problems, may struggle to grasp the alarming predictions for our planet. Lisbon, too, is no stranger to some of these issues, experiencing occasional floods that transform roads into chaotic waterways.

The residency program *Radical Waters–Concrete Matters*, part of the *Blue Makerspace* pilot project, is dedicated to exploring research-based material applications in coastal urban environments. We invite proposals that can offer an alternative vision for revolutionary design, aiming to inspire regenerative change within the local mindset ecosystem. We seek concepts that challenge norms, draw from traditional knowledge and practices, and intersect anthropology, ecology and technology. Our goal is to bridge formal and informal sectors, fostering connection, transformation, and purposeful design.

Artists, designers, architects, engineers and other creative individuals interested in sustainable applied arts are invited to apply for this residency program. We aim to incorporate water-based materials such as algae, salt, sand, pebbles, and shells into urban environments through a non-extractive lens. We are looking for prototype research projects spanning disciplines such as design, textiles, architecture, aquaculture, and more. These projects should foster innovative approaches that blur the lines between marine resources and urban design while promoting ecological awareness and locally grounded creative solutions.

Food for thought:

- What if we viewed the water of the Tagus River as a hyper-object, considering its vast scale and interconnected impact on the surrounding environment and communities?
- How can we develop innovative strategies for sustainability by incorporating algae, microorganisms (such as bacteria, fungi, archaea, or protists), salt, and other sea-based materials like seashells and seafood waste from restaurants or industries into designing for urban environments?
- How might we leverage biotechnology to reimagine and innovate traditional objects?
- How can design lead the way in transitioning from our current throwaway culture to a more resourceful world, ensuring a sustainable legacy for generations to come?
- How can design serve to unite communities on both shores for discussions about the future of the Tagus River? How can these actions raise awareness of all the ways humans relate to the river? How can more-than-humans have a place at the table in these processes?