

# The Architectural Competition and Public Space

## A HISTORY OF PETR PARLER PRIZE 2002 - 2014

### KEY WORDS

Architectural competition, competition design, competition rules, competition conditions, public procurement, public space, public area

The aim of the book is to evaluate methods for selecting the most appropriate architectural design in the form of architectural competition. The research was focused on architectural competitions whose main focus was the modification of public spaces and buildings used by the general public. The book traces the history of the competition for the Petr Parléř Award and explores the application of its results.

The research was conducted on a sample of architectural competitions that took place from 2002 to 2012 as part of Petr Parléř Award, sponsored by the Petr Parléř Society. The competition began in 2002 as a public works project with a focus on the presentation and promotion of architectural possibilities in the renovation the public spaces. It has run for more than a decade according to similar rules. The competition for the Petr Parléř Award enriched the Czech competition culture with a model that helps municipalities experience an architectural competition under favourable economic conditions and without the risk of large losses in case of failure. Answers to the basic questions of the conducted research confirmed the meaningfulness of this competition as part of the spectrum of architectural competition. The research confirmed that the municipalities, after having tried the competition, started implementing this method of selection of the best architectural solution.

The core of the research is a case study of this particular competition, and the aim of which is to obtain more detailed information from the participants using a questionnaire. The winners, as well as the municipalities that received the winning architectural designs, were addressed in this questionnaire. The research focused on whether or not it is possible to determine what factors during the competition played a main role in affecting the successive results, and how both the addressed authors of the competing architectural designs and the contracting authority of the competition subjects representing the municipality assess the competition.

Answers to the basic questions of the conducted research confirmed the meaningfulness of this competition as part of the spectrum of architectural competitions. The competition for the Petr Parléř Award enriched the Czech competition culture with a model that helps municipalities experience an architectural competition under favourable economic conditions, and without the risk of large losses in case of failure. The research confirmed that the municipalities, after having tried the competition, began implementing this method of selection of the best architectural solution. On the other hand, the method of the architectural competition carries certain issues and risks for all participants. By implementation of an appropriate process it is possible to reduce or eliminate such issues and risks in the preparation and competition stages, as well as when utilizing the results.

The competition risks include the use of competition designs following the competition, if the municipality lacks sufficient willpower, competence and energy to follow through and move the competition proposal into the state of completed building. Another risk is a lack of respect for copyright of the authors of the competition proposals. Ideas from the competition designs are used in the preparation of project documentation by the planners, which are selected by the municipality either as part of a commercial competition when competing for the project documentation award, or directly. The municipalities do not feel limited by the results of the competition. In this approach to the results of the competitions, the one-subject competition does not differ from the multi-subject competition.

The competition proposals from the Petr Parléř Award, in the twelve years of its existence, are an illustrative set of proposals of public area and buildings in the public space that shows an architectural view of their solutions at a time when the society gradually recognizes the value and role of public areas, and starts to shift from the very individualistic needs of individual investors to search for a common interest in a democratic, open and beautiful space for all.