

CITROËN CULTURAL CENTRE

A new ambition
for Brussels



Place de l'Yser 7 - 1000 Brussels
50°85'84"N - 4°34'89"E

be culture
be.brussels 

ICONIC BUILDING IN BRUSSELS



Centre Pompidou partnership



CIVA - International Centre
for Urbanism, Architecture & Landscape



International architecture competition



THE CITROËN CULTURAL CENTRE

A new ambition for Brussels

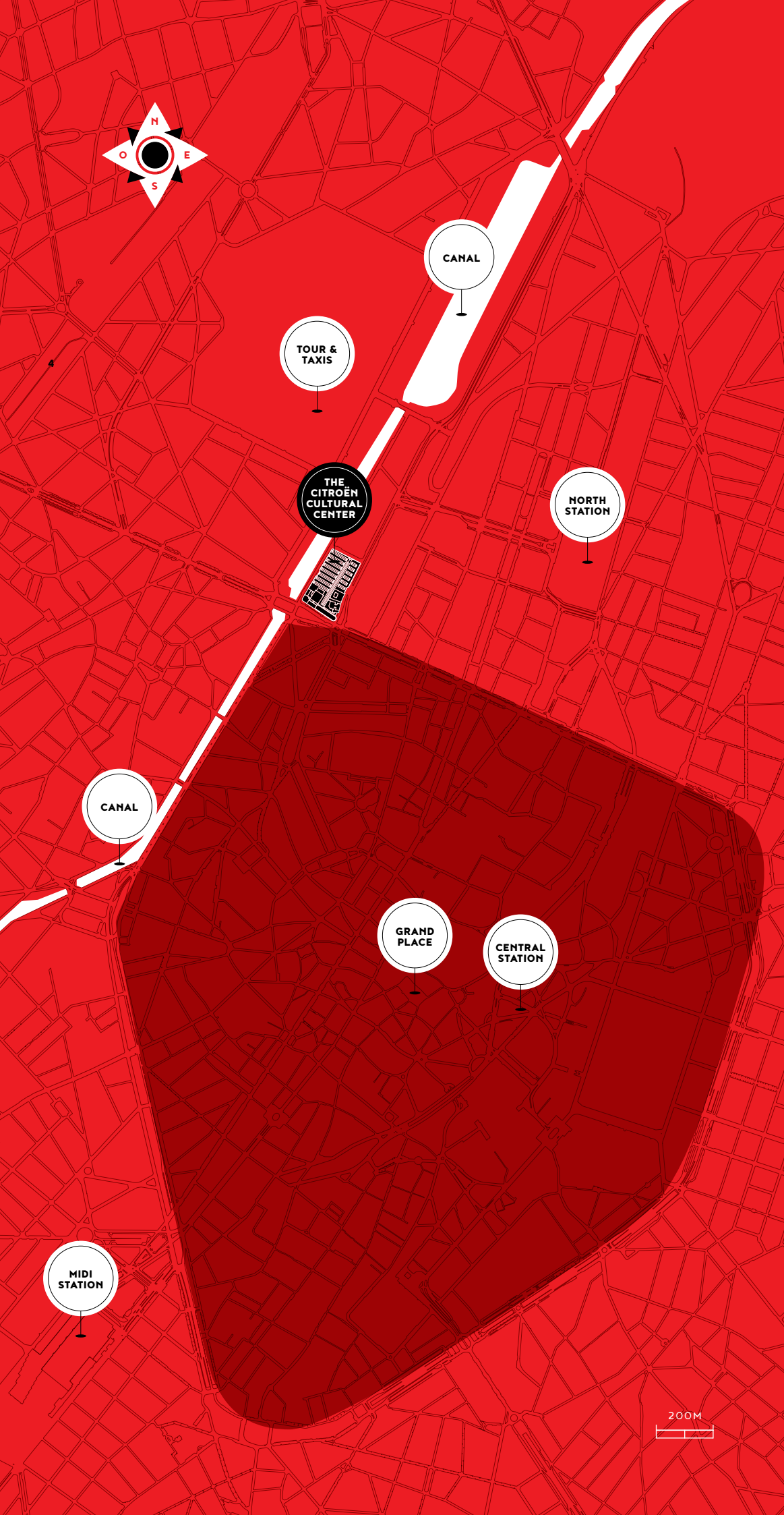


THE CITROËN CULTURAL CENTRE: A NEW AMBITION FOR BRUSSELS

What do our cities need? What do our citizens need? These two questions are at the heart of the Citroën Cultural Centre project, because culture is essential for emancipation, development and ambition. In a multicultural city like Brussels, where co-existence is a daily reality, **we need places that bring us together, places that innovate, places that create, places that forge links.** Links - social and cultural links: these are what we want! In fact, **cultural investment may never have been more important than in the 21st century.** This Citroën Cultural Centre will create a connection between all the people of Brussels. **It will be made a reality with the people of Brussels, and it will raise the profile of Brussels and its people.** The idea is to develop a multidisciplinary cultural venue by creating two new museums in Brussels: one dedicated to modern and contemporary art, and the other to architecture. **All forms of cultural creativity will have a place here:** the visual arts and architecture, of course, but also dance, drama, film, literature and music. We are now realising this wish **in partnership with the Centre Pompidou in Paris** - a sure sign of seriousness, credibility and, above all, ambition. This new cultural ambition for Brussels, initiated by Minister-President Rudi Vervoort's Regional Government, involves the organisation of **an international architecture competition** to appoint the best possible team to turn the rough diamond of the Citroën garage into an extraordinary multidisciplinary cultural jewel. It will be the pride of Brussels, and one of its finest showcases. Let's get to work!!!

Yves Goldstein

PROJECT COORDINATOR OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE BRUSSELS-CAPITAL REGION
FOR THE CITROËN CULTURAL CENTRE



• A MAJOR NEW CULTURAL CENTRE TO RAISE THE PROFILE OF EUROPE'S CAPITAL

• THE MISSIONS OF THE CITROËN CULTURAL CENTRE

Devoting a 35,000 m² building to culture: is such an undertaking still possible nowadays?

The Brussels-Capital Region has decided to answer this question with a resounding and ambitious 'yes'. It plans to create **the largest museum in Brussels since the beginning of the 20th century**. Because it is convinced that, more than ever before, emancipation and the life of the community depend on culture; and because it aspires to make this new cultural centre both **a lever for the development of an urban region in the midst of regeneration** and **a showcase that will raise the profile of Europe's Capital**. The Citroën Cultural Centre represents a new ambition for every inhabitant of Brussels, a proactive project on behalf of a district, a city and a country. This major new cultural centre right in the heart of Brussels will celebrate creativity in the city, boost cultural tourism and **give every one of its inhabitants a cultural venue that is accessible and educational**.

In addition to the areas dedicated to cultural exhibitions, multipurpose leisure and education spaces are also part of the plans. Because, crucially, **the ambition is also to provide public spaces inside the building**, since this project is all about creating a venue that is open to all.

In terms of modern and contemporary art, architecture and culture in general, Brussels

is obviously already a city of many assets. One of Europe's leading cultural hubs, the Capital-Region is home to a large number of institutions dedicated to a huge range of artistic disciplines. It attracts audiences from all over Belgium and further afield, and **artists of all types, drawn by the creative melting-pot of Brussels' different districts**; their combined talents help to make Brussels a true cultural capital.

The missing pieces in this magnificent jigsaw are a museum of modern and contemporary art and a museum of architecture. Two museums, both of which must be of a sufficiently high standard to reflect the Belgian, and more specifically the Brussels tradition in these fields; and to reflect, too, **the quality of the collections, both public and private, elsewhere in Brussels and Belgium**.

Although Brussels has always been at the cutting edge in these two fields, this creativity has all too often remained relatively unrecognised in the city itself. Accordingly, **another ambition of the Citroën Cultural Centre is to shine a brighter light on Brussels**. As a place that fosters inventiveness, creativity, dreams and innovation and offers support to artists, Brussels deserves such a cultural centre.

THE CITROËN CULTURAL CENTRE WILL CONSIST OF:

15,000 m²

dedicated to modern and contemporary art

9,000 m²

dedicated to architecture, including the International Centre for Urbanism, Architecture & Landscape (CIVA)

10,000 m²

dedicated to multipurpose public spaces for relaxation and education, accessible to all.

ITS MAIN MISSIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- promoting modern and contemporary art and architecture;
- celebrating Brussels creativity;
- giving all the people of Brussels a cultural venue that is accessible and educational;
- supporting the development of the Canal Area and the centre of the Brussels-Capital Region;
- boosting cultural tourism in Brussels;
- raising Brussels' profile.

● THE CIVA FOUNDATION

The International Centre for Urbanism, Architecture and Landscape, Brussels

The CIVA Foundation contributes to the development of an architectural, landscape and urban culture that engages with contemporary challenges, with a specific emphasis on Brussels.

In pursuit of its goals, the CIVA Foundation undertakes a large number of activities and services, both on its own premises and elsewhere, including temporary and permanent exhibitions, lectures and debates, educational activities, publications, contests and awards. It also makes an exceptional collection of archives, libraries and documentation centres available to the public, with nearly 40,000 books and journals dedicated to architecture, urban planning, urban history, landscape, gardens and urban ecology.

The Educational Activities Department raises the awareness of young audiences about architecture, the historical heritage, the city and the different branches of the arts that affect the built environment. It offers numerous activities, including interactive and guided visits and didactic tools (activity booklets, educational packs, etc.) to children, individually or in groups, schools, youth associations and families.

The Modern Architecture Department brings together the collections of the Archives of Modern Architecture and the Sint-lukasarchief;

a documentation centre (containing biographies, magazine and newspaper articles and other items), which makes available, lends and incorporates into exhibitions the resources of a photographic library and scans of the main documents; a library containing some 30,000 works; collections of rare Belgian and foreign plates; and an exceptional collection of architectural, urban planning and applied arts journals from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.

The Garden, Landscape and Urban Ecosystem Department includes the collections of the René Pechère Library and the Paul Duvigneaud Centre. It offers a unique set of nearly 15,000 items in many languages, covering more than four centuries of work (a digital catalogue has been online since 1996). It is distinguished by the variety of materials for researchers, including documentary archives, original plans, photographs, models and audiovisual documents. It also organises exhibitions, garden visits, literary prizes, activities and lectures.

A new department, the Contemporary Urban Issues Department, refocuses attention on urban issues relating to city planning and architecture, via conferences, meetings, debates, exhibitions, installations, city tours and so on.

🔍 MORE INFORMATION www.civa.brussels

● THE CENTRE POMPIDOU

National Centre for Art and Culture, Paris



The Centre Pompidou is a French public institution overseen by the Ministry of Culture and Communication. Featuring **iconic architecture** designed by Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers, it was opened in 1977. The Centre Pompidou brings together in a single venue **one of the world's most important museums, holding Europe's leading collection of modern and contemporary art**, cinemas and performances, educational spaces and a research library on 20th and 21st century art. It is associated with a public reading library and a music research institute (IRCAM).

With **more than 120,000 works**, the Centre Pompidou holds **one of the world's leading collections of 20th and 21st century art**. From

its large historical collections to its more recent acquisitions, it covers the fields of the visual arts, drawing, photography, new media, experimental cinema, architecture, design and industrial foresight.

A platform for exchanges between society and contemporary artists, the Centre Pompidou is a popular venue which receives **more than 3 million visits a year**. It aims to reach an ever wider audience, offering access to the latest contemporary creativity and forming close ties with the artists.

🔍 MORE INFORMATION www.centrepompidou.fr

● CITROËN YSER

A cathedral of steel & glass



In the early 1930s, André Citroën bought a plot of land at Place de l'Yser. It was the ideal site for his **new car factory, which was to be the largest garage in Europe for some time.** The site benefited from excellent visibility and good accessibility, close to the Canal and the historic centre of Brussels.

In collaboration with the French architect Maurice-Jacques Ravazé, the Belgian architects Alexis Dumont and Marcel Van Goethem designed an enormous complex of 16,500 m², made largely of glass, steel and concrete, which **closely reflected the modernist spirit of the time.** As well as these materials, **characteristics such as openness, transparency, flexibility, horizontality, functionality and light were an important part of the design.**

The complex, which occupies virtually an entire urban block, consists literally of a head and a body: **the showroom facing the city and the workshops located by the quays and the Canal.** Brand image, people and logistics were central to the concerns of André Citroën and his architects. Located at the intersection of Place de l'Yser and Quai de Willebroeck, **the showroom is a**

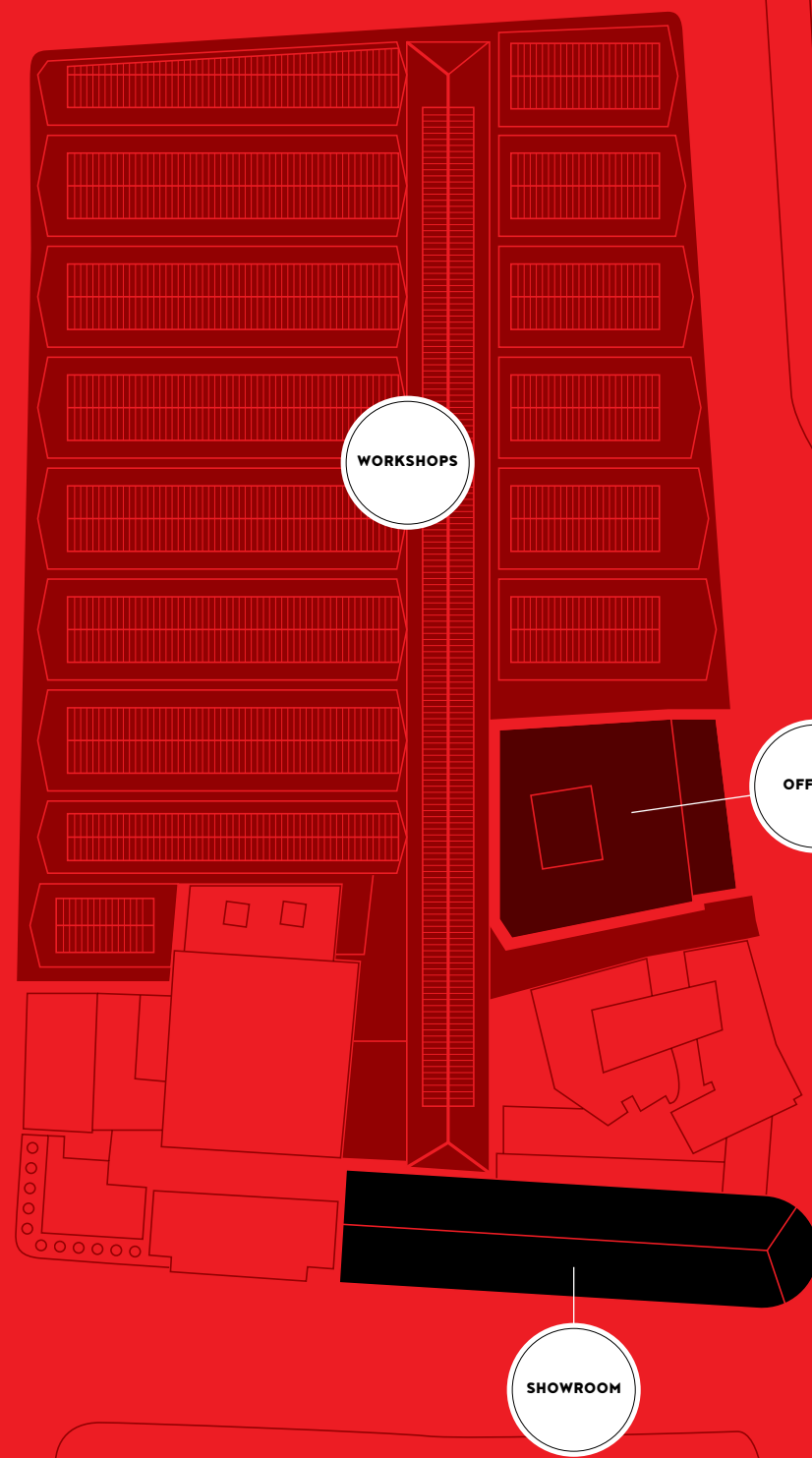
deliberately spectacular 21-metre-high glass palace, characterised by a rounded curtain wall extending from the ground floor to the roof. This curtain wall is structured vertically by oval columns that emphasise the slenderness of this 'cathedral of space and light', and finished off by a horizontal course projecting above it.

Originally, the showroom consisted solely of a ground floor with marble flooring, a curved ceiling and indirect electric lighting. Light was regarded as having an important role to play in promoting the brand and contributing to the building's iconic qualities. During the Second World War, the building was occupied first by the German army and then by British troops. It subsequently returned to its original use, and additional floors were added to increase the floor space available for the garage business.

At the heart of the building, **the gigantic workshop hall** originally housed all operations: offices, assembly, repairs, a petrol station and storage. **Cars were manufactured on site and passed directly into the showroom for display.**

CANAL

CANAL



While the showroom drew attention to the finished product, the workshops focused on productivity and the production process. The architecture emphasised the importance of daylight to the workers' activities, and its execution conveyed an image of expertise and technicality.

The most striking element is the ingenious roof resting on metal lattice columns via a number of elegant riveted beams. It features glazed panels which provide **overhead natural lighting in the workshops** as well as a **curtain wall glazed from floor to ceiling** and running round the entire perimeter of the building.

The site has four (main) entrances situated on the north-south axis and the east-west axis. In the workshops, the north-south axis is accentuated by a taller row of lattice columns perpendicular to the other spans. This creates a link with the showroom. From contemporary drawings and photos, it can be deduced that

this linking element was fitted with a glazed panel of impressive size. On the same axis lies the southern access, leading to Place de l'Yser. In the building's original design, there was thus an unimpeded view from the showroom to the workshops and vice versa.

The east-west axis was a secondary axis, and its access points are characterised by the deflection of the façades inwards towards the doors. **An 'inner street' links Quai de Willebroek with the Canal.** Transparency is optimised and visual interaction with the water is a reality.

André Citroën was ahead of his time, not just in the typology of the building he wanted, but also in its method and speed of construction. All the latticework was pre-fabricated, enabling the metallic structure to be erected like a tower of cards in just three weeks. The story goes that the installation of the curtain wall and the interior fittings were completed during the following three weeks...



● AT THE HEART OF BRUSSELS & THE CENTRE OF A RAPIDLY REGENERATING CANAL AREA

The Citroën building is next to the Pentagon (1), the historic centre of Brussels, and is located at the heart of the **Canal Area, the rapidly regenerating axis passing through Brussels** from south to north.

The development of the Canal Area is one of the urban planning priorities of the Government of the Brussels-Capital Region: **housing developments** (2) are under construction to receive the new inhabitants; the focus is on the **creation of employment** (3); **public spaces** will be created or refurbished to create links between the various neighbouring districts.

The Béco Dock, the part of the Canal next to the building, has been an epicentre for the regeneration of the Canal Area over the past few years. On the right bank, following the construction of the country's tallest residential tower (4), several housing projects are under development (2).

The Canal's left bank will be redeveloped as a park (5), which will connect the historic centre with the developing Tour & Taxis site (6). A **new bridge** for public and non-motorised transport (7) will connect the two banks and strengthen the link between the Gare du Nord administrative district and Tour & Taxis. The new Tour & Taxis Park is being developed, in phases, and will also provide a green connection with the Bockstael district (8). On and around the Tour & Taxis site, several housing and office projects are in the course of development.

The current port activities of the Béco Dock are being transferred to the Vergote Dock (9) and the 'TACT' zone (10), where new industrial facilities are being integrated into the urban development, including the activities of the Citroën garage.

Place Sainctelette (11), **the square in front of the future Citroën Cultural Centre**, will also undergo a major redevelopment in keeping with the ambitions for the latter.





● BRUSSELS

Political centre, cultural melting-pot,
capital of 500 million Europeans



The capital of Belgium and of 500 million Europeans, Brussels is home to the main European Union institutions, NATO and the largest concentration of diplomats in the world. It is also Europe's leading and the world's second most important conference city.

But Brussels is much more than that!

Much more than the European Parliament, the Atomium and the Manneken Pis...

Brussels is:

A metropolis on a human scale - green, open, tolerant, welcoming, renowned for its conviviality.

A cosmopolitan region, with a patchwork of districts with contrasting atmospheres and populations of diverse origins that make it a global city with a strongly multicultural character.

An urban landscape blending history and modernity, home to Victor Horta and many others, boasting numerous gothic, neo-classical, art nouveau and art deco masterpieces.

A place famous for its chocolate, good eating and breweries, as well as for its cartoon heroes. A distinctive sense of humour and a certain sense of self-mockery, embodied in particular by its surrealists.

A cultural melting-pot which delights in the sounds of the Queen Elisabeth Music Competition, but also of the latest bands and DJs; which attires itself in the finest creations of its couturiers and designers; which revels in the spotlight of dozens of performing arts venues... For Brussels is home to an impressive number of artists - both established and emerging - of all disciplines, home-grown and hailing from all over the world, who account for its particularly rich and inspiring creative environment.

And last but not least, a concentration of galleries, arts centres and private collections (more than 50 gallery owners have chosen to settle here during the last decade), and, among its 14,000 annual events, several gatherings devoted to contemporary art.

q MORE INFORMATION www.visitbrussels.be

INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE COMPETITION

The creation of the new Citroën Cultural Centre is the subject of an international architecture competition. The competition will take place in two phases:

PHASE 1 OPEN CALL FOR APPLICATIONS AND SHORTLIST

All firms or teams interested in the project and meeting the criteria for participation are invited to submit an application detailing the composition of their team and their vision of the project. The applications are examined and evaluated by a selection committee assisted by a technical committee. They are judged according to both their formal compliance and their intrinsic qualities. After deliberation, the selection committee shortlists the seven best candidates based on the predefined selection criteria.

PHASE 2 AWARD

The seven shortlisted candidates are invited to submit a design proposal of the new Citroën Cultural Centre.

After submission of the proposals, each participating team is invited to present and defend its project before an international panel.

After deliberation, the panel designates the winner of the competition, who will be responsible for producing the detailed plans and overseeing the preliminary studies and the construction works.

BUDGET

The budget allocated by the Brussels-Capital Region for the construction of the Citroën Cultural Centre is €125,000,000, excluding taxes and research costs.

This budget relates only to the buildings themselves and does not cover the development of external public spaces.

THE SELECTION COMMITTEE

- The Project Coordinator of the Government of the Brussels-Capital Region for the creation of the Citroën Cultural Centre
- The Chief Architect of the Brussels-Capital Region
- The Director of the SAU-MSI (Contracting Authority)
- The Director-General of BUP (Brussels Urban Planning and Heritage)
- A representative of the Centre Pompidou
- 2 external expert architects from the academic world
- 2 external museum experts from the artistic world

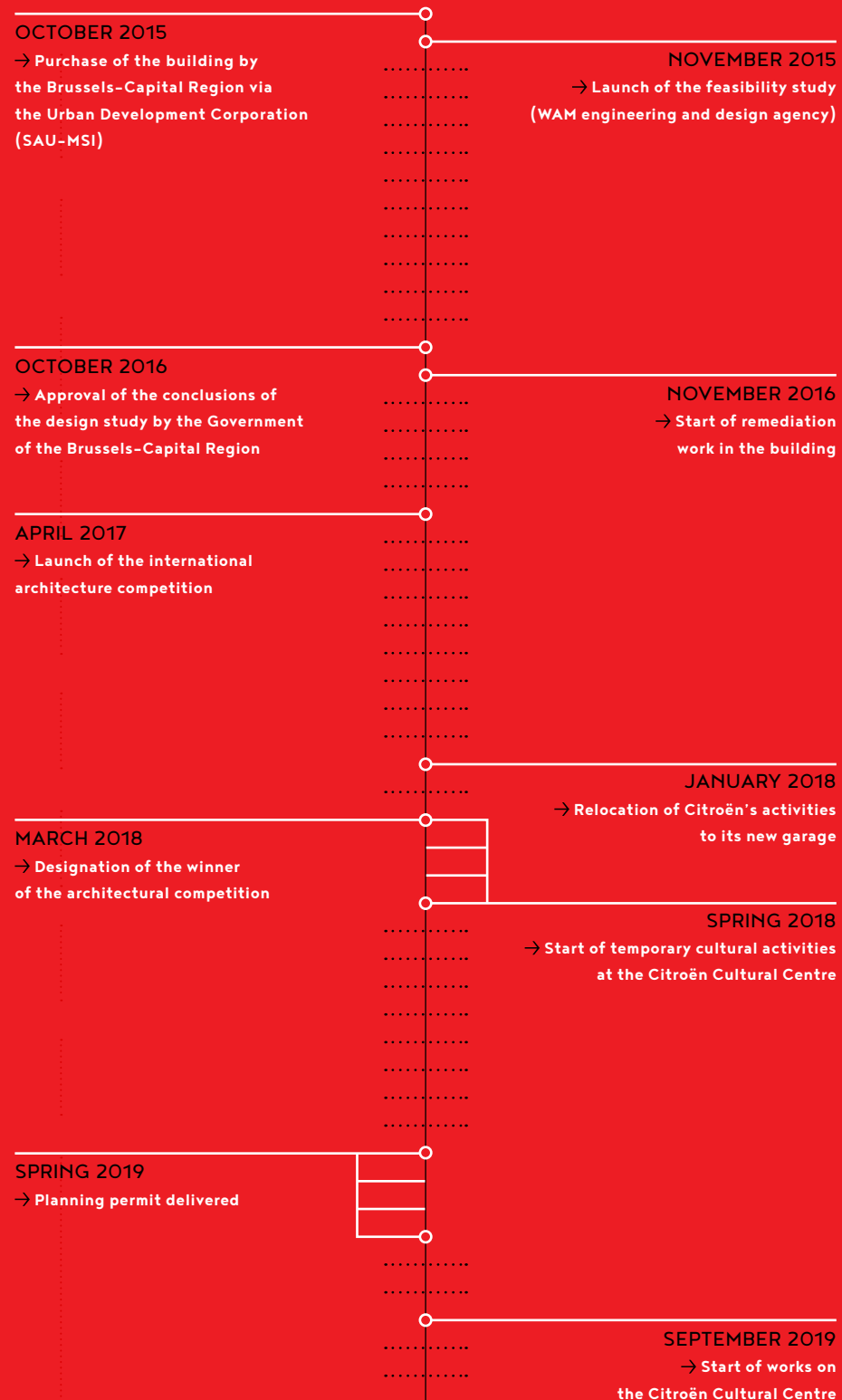
NB: The selection committee will be supported by a technical committee which will undertake the formal and administrative analysis of the applications.

THE PANEL

- 3 international experts from the world of architecture (including the chairman of the panel)
- 1 architect, representing CIVA
- A representative of the Centre Pompidou
- The Project Coordinator of the Government of the Brussels-Capital Region for the creation of the Citroën Cultural Centre
- The Chief Architect of the Brussels-Capital Region
- The Director of the SAU-MSI (Contracting Authority)
- The Director-General of BUP (Brussels Urban Planning and Heritage)

To be kept informed about the different phases of the project, subscribe to the newsletter dedicated to the Citroën Cultural Centre: www.citroenculturalcentre.brussels

PROJECT MILESTONES



COLOPHON

CONCEPT AND TEXT

SAU-MSI

-

TRANSLATION

BLABLABLA

-

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

SIGN*

PHOTO COPYRIGHTS

PAGE 2 SAU-MSI/Reporters

PAGE 3 Simon SCHMITT

(www.globalview.be), Sami BOUCHAFRATI (RLICC-IPW3-Study Citroën 2013-2014),

SAU-MSI/Reporters

PAGES 6-7 SAU-MSI/Reporters

PAGE 8 CIVA

PAGE 9 CENTRE POMPIDOU -

Manuel BRAUN

PAGE 10 SAU-MSI/Reporters

PAGE 11 SAU-MSI

PAGE 12 S.N. ESQUISSE DE LA FILIALE BELGE S.D. (RLICC-IPW3-Study Citroën 2013-2014)

PAGE 13 Simon SCHMITT

(www.globalview.be)

PAGES 14-15 VISIT BRUSSELS

(Christophe LICOPPE,

Marcel VANHULST,

Olivier VAN DE KERCHOVE),

SAU -MSI/Reporters

PAGES 18-19 VISIT BRUSSELS

-

LEGAL DEPOSIT

D/2017/14.127/1



Urban Development Corporation
Société d'Aménagement Urbain
Maatschappij voor Stedelijke Inrichting
WWW.SAU-MSI.BRUSSELS



'Bruxelles les Bains', the event that brings the Canal quays to life every summer, in front of the Citroën Yser building.



WWW.CITROENCULTURALCENTRE.BRUSSELS