



architecture, planning and design for disaster reduction and reconstruction,  
11th i-Rec student competition

## (IN)FORMALITIES

### Coordinating Responses to Risk, Disasters, and Climate Change

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#### The jury

**Renato D'Alençon Castrillón (President of the Jury)**, Professor, School of Architecture, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Santiago, Chile

**Lee Boshier**, Professor of Risk and Associate Dean of Research Excellence, School of Business, University of Leicester, Leicester, UK

**Wesley Cheek**, Professor, Department of Emergency Management, Massachusetts Maritime University, Bourne, USA

**Fatma Özdoğan**, PhD Candidate, Faculty of Environmental Design, Université de Montréal, Montreal, Canada

#### JURY REPORT, May 28, 2025

The 2025 edition of the i-Rec student competition focused on the notion of (IN)FORMALITIES, inviting participants to explore the complex interplay between formal systems and informal practices in addressing disaster risk, climate change, and recovery. The competition encouraged students to reflect on how planning, architecture, and design can contribute to more adaptive and inclusive responses to crises, particularly in contexts where institutional frameworks are weak, fragmented, or insufficient.

Participants were also invited to reflect on the ethical dimensions of risk and vulnerability, and to explore how different forms of knowledge, agency, and governance interact in the face of disaster. The competition invited them to consider questions such as:

- How can we effectively identify and understand diverse forms of agency involved in disaster response?
- What are the key factors that influence the success of risk management efforts?
- What innovative strategies can be developed to better integrate formal and informal actions in vulnerability reduction?
- In what ways can local knowledge and practices be integrated into formal practices and frameworks?

- How can policies and programs be designed to incorporate grassroots initiatives, bottom-up solutions, rituals, and traditional practices?

Students responded with a wide range of interpretations. Many addressed informal responses as drivers of creativity and community engagement; others emphasized the limits of formal systems and the need to recognize embedded cultural responses. The submissions included:

- Design innovations developed in response to climate risks or social vulnerabilities.
- Strategies to revalue vernacular knowledge and integrate it into resilient planning.
- Projects exploring hybrid governance frameworks, engaging both institutions and informal actors.
- Interventions at multiple scales, from community-based designs to regional planning visions.

**The 2025 student competition received 15 entries from Colombia, Chile, Italy, Ukraine, and Iran.** Projects covered diverse contexts and scales, from neighborhood interventions and architectural solutions to large-scale territorial strategies. The quality of the submissions reflected the richness of students' perspectives and a strong engagement with the theme.

The jury greatly appreciated the creativity, relevance, and critical insight of the projects. The variety of methodological approaches and the diversity of cultural contexts offered valuable perspectives on how future professionals are envisioning change in uncertain and risky environments. Selecting the winners was not easy, given the overall quality and commitment shown across all proposals.

After careful deliberation, the jury has reached the following agreement to award the prizes and honorable mentions.

## Winners and honourable mention

### 1<sup>st</sup> Prize

#### “Refugios Locales”

Universidad Diego Portales | Facultad de Arquitectura, Arte y Diseño, Santiago, Chile

Author: Daniel Serrano

Supervisor: Elizabeth Wagemann

*This project addresses fire risk and informal settlements in Viña del Mar, Chile. Informality and the involvement of local actors are well integrated into the co-design process. The proposal is well researched, built on a clear and relevant problem statement, and expressed through a sensitive design approach appropriate to the proposed scale and scope.*

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize

### “Islands of Joy”

Università degli Studi di Firenze | Dipartimento di Architettura, Italia

Author: Augusta Chucks

Supervisors: Roberto Bologna, Chiara Moretti, Maria Vittoria Arnetoli

*This proposal tackles coastal flooding in the Makoko settlement in the Lagos Lagoon, Nigeria. It features an attractively presented design with a strong contextual understanding and a clearly articulated problem. The originality of the design and the attention to stakeholders are consistent throughout the project.*

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize

### “From the fields to the sea, nature will run free”

Università degli Studi di Firenze | Dipartimento di Architettura, Firenze, Italy

Authors: Gehan Batnini, Matilde Borri, Ghitha Dadsi

Supervisors: Roberto Bologna, Chiara Moretti, Maria Vittoria Arnetoli

*A thoughtful proposal addressing post-war reconstruction in Gaza. It emphasizes vernacular housing and material reuse. The project demonstrates strong contextual awareness and a clear ethical commitment.*

## Highly Commended

### “Módulo de Emergencia Mhuysqa (M.E.M.)”

Universidad Piloto de Colombia | Facultad de Arquitectura y Artes, Bogotá, Colombia

Authors: Sara Valentina Fraile Moreno, Danna Preciado Martínez, Manuel Alejandro Pérez Beltrán, Martin Mendieta Patiño

Supervisors: Natalia del Pilar Correal Avilán, Maria Patricia Farfán Sopo, William Blain López, Andrea Laguna, Claudia López

*A solid and coherent proposal addressing flood risk. The project integrates people, culture, and informality in a meaningful way through its design approach.*

## Highly Commended

### “Sistema Ferroviario Seguro”

Universidad Diego Portales | Facultad de Arquitectura, Arte y Diseño, Santiago, Chile

Author: Ysé Masurier

Supervisor: Elizabeth Wagemann

*An innovative project that frames resilience through urban integration and rail infrastructure, grounded in a compelling problem statement and attentive to local dynamics.*