



Life Between Umbrellas

Design Brief

LifeBetweenUmbrellas.ca

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VANCOUVER
**PUBLIC
SPACE**
NETWORK



CITY OF
VANCOUVER





IT'S TIME TO MAKE OUR PUBLIC SPACES MORE RAIN-FRIENDLY!

photo: Pixel Stories/Stocksy

Life Between Umbrellas is an ideas, design and pop-up activation competition that seeks to improve public space and public life during Vancouver's rainy months. Presented by Vancouver Public Space Network (VPSN) and the City of Vancouver's VIVA Vancouver program, the competition has three streams:

1 | THE PLACE:

An **idea** to make a new or existing public space (such as a plaza, street, sidewalk, laneway, parklet, or park) rain-friendly;

2 | THE INTERVENTION:

A rain-friendly design feature or element, or seasonal structure- A **design** that can serve to enhance an existing public space;

3 | THE CELEBRATION:

A rain-friendly pop-up public space **activation** (e.g. an **event** or interactive installation) that will help build a more positive culture of rain-friendly activity, fostering social connections in the rainy months. (Must be delivered in Fall 2019.)

Multiple prizes will be awarded in each stream. Stream 1 includes prizes for children and youth 18 and under, and Stream 2 includes a potential design-build opportunity after the competition closes. Requirements associated with each stream are outlined on the following pages. Additional information is available at LifeBetweenUmbrellas.ca.

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REGISTER TO PARTICIPATE TODAY!

DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES: Monday, April 15, 2019
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photo: Pexels (CC)

CHALLENGE AND COMPETITION GOALS

While Vancouver has many excellent public spaces, most of these are ill-equipped to support gathering and other activities in the rain. Public life in the city is challenged by wet weather. Utilization of public spaces drops, and otherwise vibrant places have reduced opportunities for lingering and enjoyment. The umbrella overhead becomes a shield against the elements, and public life takes on an accelerated pace as people hurry to get out of the rain.

There are also specific challenges and opportunities - that come with rain. These include:

- Declining use of outdoor public spaces, and a reduction in opportunities for public gathering, celebration and sociability;
- An increase in challenges related to wellbeing, such as mental and physical health, seasonal affective disorder, social isolation, and safety;
- Equity concerns, as not everyone is equally able to access dry, covered, or comfortable public spaces;
- Infrastructure and sustainability concerns (flooding, overflow, drainage) related to storm-water.

The goals of *Life Between Umbrellas* are:

- improve the opportunities for public life during the rainy months;
- Respond to the challenges that are posed by wet weather
- Harness rain as a resource; and
- To encourage a culture of fun, friendly, wet weather activities for residents, workers and visitors to Vancouver.



UMBRELLA TERMS

A “RAIN-FRIENDLY” PUBLIC SPACE IS:

Rich in public life

Supporting and enhancing a broad array of opportunities and activities during the wet weather, including public gathering, social, cultural, and democratic activities, and in general, vibrant, well-utilized public spaces;

Sustainable

Recognizing rain as a resource; responding to the challenges of storm-water and infrastructure loading; providing attention to green design, habitat, landscape, and hydrological systems, with a view to environmental sustainability;

Good for the economy

Seeing rain as an opportunity to support the local economy and entrepreneurship;

Health-promoting and equitable

Responding to challenges posed by social isolation and inequitable access to rain-protected space; ensuring social well-being during seasons where physical and mental health can be affected by the weather.

In addition, a good wet weather space will respond to general principles outlined in Appendix A: *Principles for Rain-friendly Public Spaces*.

By “**public space**” we mean a plaza, street, sidewalk, laneway, parklet, park, or any other space that is publicly owned and accessible, or to which the public has some sort of legal entitlement (e.g. a privately-owned public space, where there is a public right of access).

A “**pop-up activation**” is a public event or interactive installation that helps people reimagine a space and connect with each other.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

In general, entries in the three streams will be evaluated based on the quality of the proposal (including the completeness of the entry), and the degree to which the proposal responds to the competition goals and *Principles for Rain-friendly Public Spaces*.

Additional specific evaluation criteria, guidelines, and submission requirements associated with each stream are outlined in the following pages.

SELECTION PROCESS

A variety of prizes will be awarded in the different streams, and winners will be selected through a combination of the following:

Independent Jury

A jury comprised of various subject matter experts will assist with (a) short-listing and (b) selecting winning entries in streams (1) and (2). You can read more about the jury at LifeBetweenUmbrellas.ca.

People's Choice

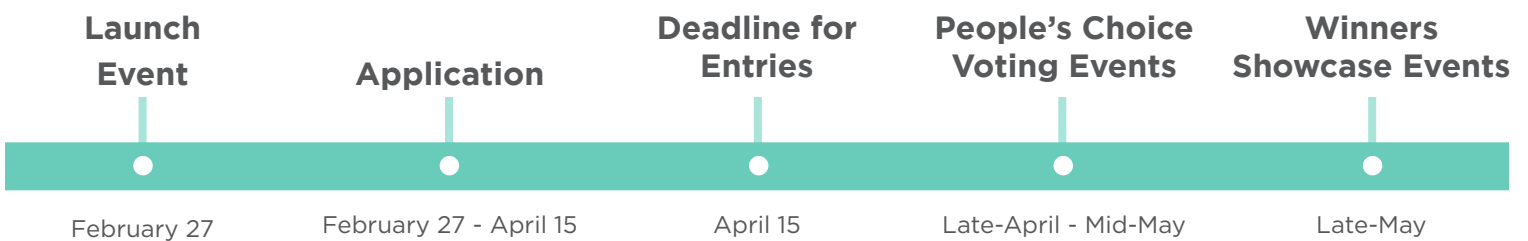
People's Choice voting will take place in person at various locations around the city to select winning entries in stream (1).

VIVA/VPSN Selection Committee

will be used to select entries in stream (3). Winners in this stream will be chosen through a blind-evaluation process by a committee comprised of City of Vancouver staff, in consultation with the Vancouver Public Space Network. This committee will also assess entries in stream (2) for possible further design-build opportunities.

Details on the specific prizes associated with each stream can be found on the following pages.

KEY DATES



QUESTIONS

Questions on the design brief can be sent to the competition organizers via email at: umbrellas@vancouverpublicspace.ca. Questions, and answers, will then be posted publicly on the LifeBetweenUmbrellas.ca competition website.



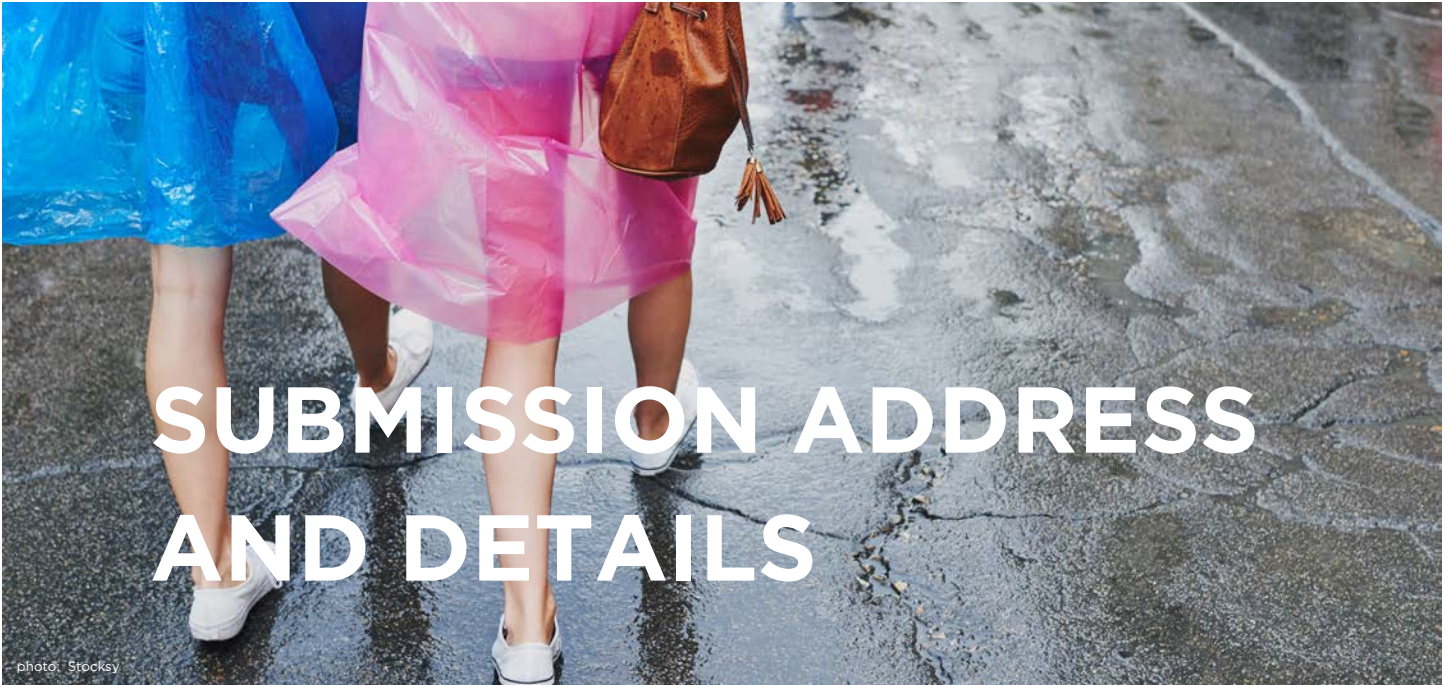


photo: Stocksy

SUBMISSION ADDRESS AND DETAILS

Files may be must be submitted in either digital format or paper copy through one of three means:

DIGITAL

Digital entries for the three streams may be sent to umbrellas@vancouverpublicspace.ca. Please note the file and file size requirements identified for each stream.

MAIL OR IN PERSON

Paper or digital copies can be mailed or dropped off in person at:

Life Between Umbrellas Competition
c/o VIVA Vancouver, Street Activities
320 - 507 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V5Z 0B4

Entries will be accepted in person at this address up to **5 pm on Monday, April 15, 2019**.

Please note that all mailed entries will need to be received no later than the competition deadline.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The competition is open to all – young and old, resident and non-resident, professional or “lay” designer - anyone interested in making public space more rain-friendly. While training in a field such as architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, planning, etc. may be helpful, professional affiliation is not required for this competition. Participants can enter individually or collaboratively.

Restrictions: The competition is not open to City of Vancouver elected officials or employees, or VPSN’s Board of Directors or Project leads.

STREAM 1

THE PLACE



photo: Stocksy

An idea to make a new or existing public space (such as a plaza, street, sidewalk, laneway, parklet, or park) rain-friendly.

GUIDELINES

Ideas for this stream should respond to the general scope of this stream, as well as the challenges and opportunities identified earlier in the Design Brief (including the *Principles for Rain-friendly Public Spaces* outlined in Appendix A). General considerations:



Location - The idea can be for a public space anywhere within the legal boundaries of the city of Vancouver;



Typology - The concept can be designed around a new or existing plaza, street, sidewalk, laneway, parklet, park, or other form of public (or publicly-accessible open space). (Exclusion: While the concept may include structural elements, the overarching design should not be for a new building);



Size - There are no specific size constraints; however concepts should be of a sufficient scale to support an array of public social and cultural activities, passive and active programming, and additional elements, as noted in the brief.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS AND FURTHER EVALUATION CRITERIA

Entries should aim to account for some or all of the following criteria:

- **Functional & Flexible** - Able to comfortably support a wide range of social and cultural activities and programming during periods of rain;
- **Adaptable** - Potential to be enjoyed during periods when it doesn't rain;
- **Elegant/beautiful** - Aesthetically pleasing; appealing to the senses; able to inspire delight;
- **Safe** - Ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing all of users;
- **All Ages & Abilities/Socially Inclusive** - Ensuring the space is accessible to a wide variety of potential users; encourage social inclusion and opportunities for social connection;
- **Sustainable** -Incorporating aspects of green design (e.g. to support wise use of storm-water, habitat enhancement, low-carbon, etc.).

PRIZES

A total of eight prizes will be awarded in this stream, as follows:

	Jury Selection	People's Choice
First Prize	\$3,500	\$2,500
Runner Up	\$2,500	\$1,000
Youth (18 and under) - First Prize	\$200	\$200
Youth (18 and under) - Runner-up	\$100	\$100



Photo: Skitterphoto/Pexels

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Submissions should include the following:

- **Plan View** - one 11x17" board with (at least) one plan view showing your proposed idea for a rain-friendly public space;
- **Perspective View** - one 11x17" board with (at least) one perspective view of the idea and surrounding context;
- **Idea Statement** - maximum 250 words, that includes the name of the idea, a description of it, and additional details outlining how it responds to the competition goals, guidelines and criteria;
- **Completed Entry Form**



In Stream (1) **participants aged 18 and under** have the option of applying with reduced submission requirements, as follows:

1. One 11x17" board including:
 - An illustration of your idea
 - A maximum 100 word statement describing your idea for a rain-friendly public space
 - Please do not include your name on the board
2. Completed Entry Form

Digital Submissions - Please submit all materials as high-resolution PDF files. (Max size for all combined files is 25 MB).

Mail or In-Person Submissions - if you are unable to provide a digital version of your submission, paper copies of the required documents will be accepted by mail or in-person drop-off.

IMPORTANT: Please include a title on each board Items (1), (2), and (3), but not your names or organizational affiliation (if you are submitting on behalf of an organization).

If your entry is short-listed, you may be asked to submit a second version scaled for poster-size showcase purposes.

STREAM 2

THE INTERVENTION



A rain-friendly design feature or element, or seasonal structure that can serve to enhance an existing public space.

GUIDELINES

Entries for this stream should respond to the general scope of this stream, as well as the challenges and opportunities identified earlier in the Design Brief (including the *Principles for Rain-friendly Public Spaces* outlined in Appendix A).

General considerations:



Location - The proposed feature can be located in a public space anywhere within the boundaries of the city of Vancouver;



Scaleable/Replicable - While you may propose a specific location, the proposed feature or element should be something that can be utilized in other similar areas.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS AND FURTHER EVALUATION CRITERIA

Entries should aim to account for some or all of the following criteria:

- **Functional and Flexible** - Enabling a range of activities to take place comfortably and safely during periods of rain;
- **Surface Mounted** - Where relevant, the design solution should be able to be freestanding or surface mounted using modular components - to facilitate installation, de-installation, and movability;
- **Feasible** - Where conceived as a modular element, the design should be buildable within a budget of approximately \$40,000;
- **Safe** - Should support the health, safety, and well-being of users. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring the feature is weather responsive (e.g. safe in windy weather, able to withstand snow-loads or high-volume rain events, etc.);
- **Maintenance** - The feature should be durable enough to withstand seasonal conditions, as well as easy to clean and maintain.

PRIZES

A total of two prizes will be awarded in this stream:

Jury Selection

First Prize	\$3,500
Runner Up	\$2,000

Your design could get built! After the contest closes, the City aims to advance the winning design toward the build stage, however, timing and feasibility of implementation will depend on a number of factors, including buildability of the winning design, cost of build, and staff resources.



SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Submissions should include the following:

1. Plan View - one 11x17" board with (at least) one plan view showing your proposed public space;
2. Perspective View - one 11x17" board with (at least) one perspective view of the design idea and surrounding context;
3. Design Statement - maximum 250 words, that includes the name of the design idea, a description of your concept for a rain-friendly public space, and additional details outlining how the design idea responds to the competition goals, guidelines and criteria;
4. Completed Entry Form

Digital Submissions - Please submit all materials as high-resolution PDF files. (Max size for all combined files is 25 MB).

In Person Submissions - if you are unable to provide a digital version of your submission, paper copies of the required documents will be accepted by mail or in-person drop-off.

IMPORTANT: Please include a title on each board Items (1), (2), and (3), but not your names or organizational affiliation (if you are submitting on behalf of an organization).

If your entry is short-listed, you may be asked to submit a second version scaled for poster-size showcase purposes.

STREAM 3

THE CELEBRATION



photo: Pexels (CC)

A rain-friendly pop-up activation (e.g. an event or interactive installation) in a public space that will help build a more positive culture of rain-friendly activity, fostering social connections in the rainy months. (Must be delivered in Fall 2019.)



GUIDELINES

A few general considerations guide entries in this stream:



Location - The following are suggested locations for activations:

- Helena Gutteridge Plaza
- 14th-Main Plaza
- šxwł'ənəq Xwtl'e7énk Square
- Chinatown Memorial Plaza
- Jim Deva Plaza
- Alley-Oop Laneway
- Bute-Robson Plaza
- Ackery's Alley
- Leg-in-boot Square

The focus is on the locations noted above, however other locations may be considered, e.g. a sidewalk, an on-street parking space, a street, or a laneway. The selection committee may suggest alternate locations where the proponent's location(s) are not feasible;



Timing - The celebration can be a single event, recurring pop-up activations, or a temporary interactive installation, and can activate one or more public spaces.



Event Logistics - All logistics (e.g. insurance, set up and take down, moving and storage) will be the responsibility of the applicant. The VIVA team can help with permitting and other approvals.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS AND FURTHER EVALUATION CRITERIA

Entries for this stream should respond to the general scope of this stream, as well as the challenges and opportunities identified earlier in the Design Brief (including the *Principles for Rain-friendly Public Spaces* outlined in Appendix A).

Entries should also be:

- **Socially engaging** - Interesting and fun, helping to bring people together and builds community;
- **All Ages & Abilities/Socially Inclusive** - Ensuring the space is accessible to a wide variety of potential users; encourage social inclusion and opportunities for social connection;
- **Innovative** - Tests something new and helps reimagine one or more public spaces;
- **Feasible** - Deliverable within the budget and timeframe.

We want to learn from each activation, so we'll be asking successful applicants to share lessons learned, as well as any other observations to encourage more and better public life in the rainy months.

PRIZES

A total of three prizes will be awarded in this stream, as follows:

VIVA/VPSN Selection Committee	
Winner 1	\$5,000
Winner 2	\$5,000
Winner 3	\$5,000

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Submissions should include the following:

1. Completed Entry Form
2. Optional supplemental materials (as identified in the entry form)

Digital Submissions - Please submit all materials via the online entry form process.

In Person Submissions - if you are unable to provide a digital version of your submission, paper copies of the required documents will be accepted by mail or in-person drop-off.

APPENDIX A: RAIN-FRIENDLY DESIGN PRINCIPLES



PRINCIPLE 1

Rain-friendly public spaces... **enable protection from the elements**

The design of rain-friendly spaces should include features that protect users from different types of inclement weather and enable a measure of comfort and safety during a downpour.



PRINCIPLE#2

Rain-friendly public spaces... **protect against specific weather-related safety and accessibility considerations**

Studies show the chance of an injury in rainy weather being two to three times greater than during dry weather. Rain-friendly public spaces work to enhance safety and accessibility for people of all ages and abilities.



PRINCIPLE 3

Rain-friendly public spaces... **support health well-being when it's harder to go outside**

Rainy weather can create a barrier to physical activity. In addition, the cold, darker months can also impact mental health. Rain-friendly public spaces support integrated health and well-being by ensuring opportunities for exercise and social interaction.



PRINCIPLE 4

Rain-friendly public spaces... **foster social inclusion, connection, and community-building**

Good public space is accessible to, and engaging for, people of all ages, genders, ethnicities, abilities and life circumstances. Rain-friendly public space takes this up a notch, recognizing the additional challenges that come during cold and wet-weather.



PRINCIPLE 5

Rain-friendly public spaces... **provide a multisensory response to grey, overcast and wet weather**

Good design will act as a counterpoint to the darker aspects of the rainy season, adding brightness and other sensory measures to enliven public spaces.



PRINCIPLE 6

Rain-friendly public spaces... **support a range of weather-appropriate activities and programming for residents and visitors**

Effective programming and stewardship supports public life during the rainy months by providing ways to help people make the best of things!



PRINCIPLE 7

Rain-friendly public spaces... **catalyze culture and creativity**

Rain can provide a cloud-burst of inspiration for art, story-telling, cultural production and performance. Rain-friendly spaces provide precipitation as a starting point for creative expression.



PRINCIPLE 8

Rain-friendly public spaces... **support the local economy**

As the local economy expands, and as the sharing economy grows, Vancouver's role as a rainy-city can serve as a driver of cooperativism, entrepreneurialism, and exchange.



PRINCIPLE 9

Rain-friendly public spaces... **inspire learning, innovation, and adaptation**

Vancouver can lead the way with public spaces that support public life in the rainy months. Part of this will come from encouraging a culture of testing new ideas. Another part will come from learning from the many ideas that are used by other cultures, or have been tried in the past.



PRINCIPLE#10

Rain-friendly public spaces... **are sustainable, resilient, and regenerative**

Rain is an integral part of the local hydrologic (water) cycle. Public spaces can help support the environment by restoring natural systems, reducing storm-water runoff, harvesting rain for various uses. This will be especially important, as Vancouver will experience more extreme weather events in the future.

A complete set of principles, objectives, and ideas can be found at LifeBetweenUmbrellas.ca