

New Models on Common Ground
Re-imagining the Question of Cultural Infrastructure
An INSERT 2014 project

Open call for speculations from artists, curators, scholars, writers & poets, architects, cultural practitioners, activists, culture researchers, critics, media practitioners and engaged art enthusiasts for the re-imagination of spaces and cultural infrastructure in Delhi.

Last date for submission: November 1st, 2013

Raqs Media Collective, an artistic and curatorial collective based in Delhi, invites proposals for the imaginative rethinking of unused public spaces and cultural infrastructure in Delhi. The purpose of this exercise is to discover the city's potential for being hospitable to an exciting life of culture and contemporary art through the imaginative re-usage and adaptation of existing spaces and infrastructure. This call hopes to act as a provocation for artists and cultural practitioners to discover and propose ideas that can be leveraged, adapted and transformed to lay the foundations for a distinct and dynamic art and culture scene.

From Rabindra Rangshala in the Ridge, to the Dolls Museum at ITO, and the Delhi Public Library opposite Old Delhi Railway Station, Delhi is full of spaces that await intervention and innovative usage. This call seeks hypothetical propositions, detailed plans and programs, precise ideas for intervention as well as poetic invocations of latent and potential possibility for these spaces.

The curatorial intention of this call and project is to find and articulate fresh ways of thinking around a wide selection of spaces, the wide range of which includes public libraries, auditoriums, and community centers, amongst others. The aim is to inaugurate a rethinking of 'place' in contemporary art as an active presence, and the foregrounding of the poetics of usage as a vital axis of art's inhabitation with life and its potential.

While each such site comes laden with distinct narratives waiting to be considered, our interest is to fuel ideas towards reanimating these spaces and their practices of use beyond the paradigms of historicity, heritage, nostalgia and obsolescence. What interests us is the future life of culture in the city; not a lament over the loss of the past. We are looking for intriguing, varied responses that explore history without being beholden to it, navigate the tension between the public, private and personal facets of a space, and re-write the rules, protocols and limitations of the way in which the institution makes itself present to the city. The proposals should be experimental, audacious, realistic, yet un-restrained. Contributors are invited to think ambitiously so that a daring set of proposals about how the cultural life of the city may be re-imagined can animate public discussion in an exciting way.

Submissions will feature as one of the axes of the international contemporary art exhibition - INSERT 2014 - curated by Raqs Media Collective, and presented by

INLAKS Shivdasani Foundation, with support from Goethe Institute, New Delhi, that will open at the Maati Ghar (Mud House), IGNC from the 31st of January 2014. The project 'New Models on the Common Ground' is made possible with the generous support of India Foundation for the Arts, Bangalore, India.

The proposals should have the following:

- a) A plan for how the space and built form is to be re-imagined
- b) A program-plan with a durational aspect of unfolding (from 3 months to 2 years)
- c) An examination of artistic and curatorial research possibilities
- d) An exploration of intersection with other practices and imagined publics

30 speculations will be selected. The selected proposals will receive:

- an honorarium of INR 7,500/-
- online and print publication of the proposal to ensure a large global circulation
- exhibition of the speculations in Delhi in January 2014
- further conversation on the possibility of taking the proposal forward towards possible realization with the curators and IFA, Bangalore, over the coming years.

We expect the propositions in their final form to reach us by the 31st of October by email to newcommongrounds@gmail.com with a subject line 'Proposal: <your name>' along with an updated CV. Please feel free to ask further questions through email. Applicants need not be based in Delhi to apply. Applications may also be submitted in Hindi.

Download the list and images of the sites that we offer as a possibility to kick off the process of speculation, from this link: <http://bit.ly/1g439nx>

You are also free to propose spaces outside this suggestive list. If you do so, please back up your proposal with adequate documentation for these spaces and facilities.