



## gapLab 2026–2029

Open Call

---

### **Become part of gapLab — an IAF Open Call**

The Irish Architecture Foundation (IAF) invites applications from architects and architecture graduates to become part of gapLab.

Established in 2023, gapLab is the IAF's strategic programme to support early career and graduate architects. Through an open, self-directed programme of peer learning, mentoring and creative and financial investment, members of gapLab are supported to take risks, make new work and build their skills and capacities to engage public audiences with architecture.

Successful applicants will become members of gapLab for a period of three years. This time period aligns with the delivery of the IAF's first work plan under our strategy, Building Our Knowledge 2026-2032. New members of gapLab will join a growing national network of practitioners committed to advancing architecture through design, research, making, writing, education, public engagement and cultural practice.

Supporting those who work as individuals or collectives, members of gapLab receive opportunities for mentoring, collaboration, residencies, exhibitions, publications, public programming and professional development through the work of the Irish Architecture Foundation and its partners.

Applications are invited from early career architects and architecture graduates who are curious, ambitious and committed to developing new forms of architectural practice, specifically with a focus on meeting audiences with architecture.

### **Why this call, why now?**

Since 2023, the IAF has evolved gapLab through a series of specific open calls (Residency in the Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris; Bog Bothy workshop; Open House Dublin Writer in Residence, etc.) and through direct invitation of individuals and collectives whose work aligned with our mission to bring architecture to specific audiences. While the IAF may continue to have themed calls following this period of initial development, we feel it is important to have an open call, thus providing the

# IAF

opportunity for all architects and architecture graduates who meet the criteria to become part of this unique and exciting programme.

## Why apply?

The IAF has identified a number of gaps in architecture practice and culture in Ireland. Unlike other artforms and creative practices, architecture had no young-artist or young-creative programme. Evidence is that such programmes are vital to building a bridge between education and training and to becoming established within creative and cultural practice. In addition, we have observed that many architecture graduates wish to continue the kind of creative practice they enjoyed in university, where ideas could be discussed, explored and realised in a supportive manner. gapLab is intended to afford people further opportunities to work together as collectives or individually to explore their evolving practices in architecture in an open model that aligns with the best of educational studio culture. IAF addresses both these gaps in our gapLab programme.

IAF notes that while there are good financial supports and grants available to individuals or collectives to support their creative practice, there is less infrastructural support available for a network of emerging architects to gather, share and learn from each other, particularly when it comes to making work in architecture that seeks to engage public audiences. As our key mission is to meet public audiences with architecture wherever they are, IAF established gapLab as a kind of laboratory, where architects interested in working with and for public audiences might develop their skills and capacities.

If these gaps resonate with your work in architecture today, and if you wish to be part of a growing network of critically engaged, ambitious and risk-taking individuals interested in being part of advancing the culture of architecture in Ireland today, gapLab is a place for you.

## Who can apply?

Applications are invited from early career architects and architecture graduates who:

- Have completed a Part II qualification in a school of architecture on the island of Ireland (or equivalent internationally).
- Are within eight years of completing their Part II at the time of this application closing date.
- Can explain in a clear and compelling way why gapLab would benefit their work at this time.

# IAF

- Can explain in a clear and compelling way what they see as their potential contribution to gapLab and their peer network therein.
- Can show evidence of work in architecture, across some or all, but not limited to, the following: building, design, art, landscape, ecology, research, public engagement, cultural production, exhibition making, installations, etc.

## How do I apply?

We aim to keep this process as light as possible. It is a two-stage process.

### Stage 1

For Stage 1 we ask **individuals** to send us some basic information about you and your work to date.

- A statement which begins with the sentence, *I wish to be in gapLab because* (300 words).
- A statement which begins with the sentence, *My contribution to gapLab will be* (150 words).
- A CV (1 A4 page, with open links to work).

For Stage 1, we ask **collectives** to send us some basic information about you and your work to date.

- A statement which begins with the sentence, *We wish to be in gapLab because* (300 words).
- A statement which begins with the sentence, *Our contribution to gapLab will be* (150 words).
- A statement about why you have formed a collective and your shared aims (150 words).
- A CV (1 A4 page, with open links to work, one per collective).

Stage 1 applications should be emailed to [opportunities@IAF.ie](mailto:opportunities@IAF.ie) by 21 August 2026.

All documents above should be sent as PDF attachments and as individual files, not a single combined file. Incomplete applications will not be assessed.

## How is my application assessed?

The IAF will appoint an independent panel of up to two people to assess and shortlist the applications with support from the IAF. The IAF will inform all applicants of the outcome within 21 working days.



## Stage 2

The IAF will invite up to 10 individuals or collectives for a 20-minute online conversation to assist in making a final decision.

### How long does this take?

Applications open: July 10, 2026

Questions Close: July 31, 2026

Applications Close: August 21, 2026

Stage 1 Assessment: Week Commencing, August 24, 2026

Decisions Notified: Week Commencing, August 31, 2026

Online Conversations: Week Commencing, August 31, 2026

Public Announcement: September, 2026

### Frequently Asked Questions:

#### I am from Northern Ireland, may I apply?

Yes. gapLab is an all-island programme and we welcome applications from eligible architects and architecture graduates from Northern Ireland.

#### I am not resident in Ireland, may I apply?

Yes. You do not have to be currently resident in Ireland to apply. However, you should consider your ability to participate meaningfully in the programme and its activities over the three-year period.

#### We are a collective, may we apply?

Yes. gapLab supports both individuals and collectives. Collectives should make one application together and follow the application requirements for collectives outlined above.

#### I have recently graduated and do not yet have an established practice. May I apply?

Yes. You do not need to have an established practice to apply. However, your application should demonstrate evidence of your interests and work to date and clearly explain how you wish to develop your practice through gapLab.

#### Who is in gapLab now? Who has been part of it before?

Current and previous members of gapLab include Ben Weir, Liza Goncharenko, Loay Dieck, Rubble, Sarah Adekoya, Brian Ward, Islander Architects, Conor Curley, Clare Creedon and Dean Black.

# IAF

## **What is the expected time commitment over the three-year period?**

gapLab is a self-directed programme rather than a fixed course or residency. There is no set weekly time commitment. Members will be expected to engage with the peer network and to participate in relevant opportunities, activities and conversations over the three-year period.

## **What kind of support is available to gapLab members?**

Support will vary depending on the work and interests of individual members and the opportunities that emerge through the programme. This may include mentoring, collaboration, residencies, exhibitions, publications, public programming, professional development, and creative and financial investment through the IAF and its partners.