



# 2023 Summer Residency at the Block House

Apply at [blockhouser residency.org](https://blockhouser residency.org)

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## Introduction

The Institute for Public Architecture (IPA) welcomes applications for the Summer Independent Projects Residency, based at the historic Block House on Governors Island. The IPA uses design to challenge social and physical inequities in our cities. We address urgent issues of design and policy by mobilizing our network of design activists, professionals, and community stakeholders.

Emerging and mid-career architects, urbanists, policymakers, artists, and those committed to the public realm in all disciplines are invited to apply. Applicants will bring their own interests and projects to the program and will receive opportunities to present their work to the public on Governors Island over the course of the Residency. Each Fellow also receives invaluable project support through access to subject matter experts and resources relevant to their project.

The 2023 Summer Residency follows upon the success of last year's inaugural Residency at the Block House, whose Fellows were among the first civilian residents on the island since the Coast Guard's exit in 1996. This year's Fellows will enjoy unparalleled historic, natural, and urban resources with direct access to Downtown Manhattan and waterfront Brooklyn neighborhoods via ferry.

The IPA is one of more than twenty arts, cultural, educational, and environmental nonprofit organizations-in-residence on the Island, which form a unique community that connects with a diverse and growing audience of nearly one million annual visitors.

## Who should apply

The Summer Residency program is open to applicants from diverse backgrounds, educations, experiences, and aspirations. Applicants may be architects, urbanists, policymakers, and/or artists, working in either theoretical or practical disciplines. The program is best suited to applicants with a clearly developed focus and/or approach who need time and space to work independently.

## Program goals

This program is designed to support Fellows with research and design projects at any stage of development who would benefit from sharing their work in the collective, interdisciplinary context of the Residency. To that end, time will be set aside throughout the Summer for Fellows to present and discuss their work with the cohort, IPA staff, guests, and members of the public.

During the Residency, Fellows' work can be presented in any format: academic papers, articles, and/or book chapters, film, installations, drawings, models, maquettes, among others. The program will culminate in an exhibition of work at the Block House, and eventually a publication.

## Program structure

This program offers Fellows the opportunity to bring their own interests and projects to New York City, with its vast network of expertise and leadership in the fields of architecture, urbanism, and design. Fellows will be asked to present the progress of their work to the public in a series of Open [Block] House events on Governors Island. Each Fellow will also receive invaluable project support through the IPA's network of subject matter experts and resources. Programming includes:

- **Open [Block] House:** A series of public events at the Block House invites visitors to engage in conversation with Fellows about their work.
- **Open Library:** The Block House library and gallery is open to the public on weekends. Fellows are invited to interact with visitors and share the progress of their work.
- **Dinner Parties:** A series of curated evenings are held throughout the Summer with guests and former fellows invited to dine with the cohort.
- **Cohort Activities:** Fellows are invited to join a series of urban walking tours, field trips, museum and archive visits, and events on Governors Island and the larger New York City region.



## Practical info

### **Duration:**

June 1 - August 18, 2023 (11 weeks)

### **Participants:**

The Residency welcomes global applicants at any stage of their career. The selection will be based on experience, intent and the relevancy of the project to the IPA's mission and the Residency's location within New York City. The program is especially well-suited for those on sabbatical or with funded projects, in that it provides strategic housing and project support for a period of 11 weeks. Applications will be reviewed and Fellows selected by an independent jury.

### **Fellow responsibilities:**

Fellows will be expected to:

- Live and work collectively with other Fellows, including sharing household responsibilities.
- Purchase their own groceries and any personal items throughout the Residency (with the exception of catered events such as the dinner parties).
- Keep communal and private areas clean.
- Participate in Fellow cohort activities and public presentations.

## Submission of applications:

Applicants should submit the following documentation through the online form:

- **Statement of interest:** Address (1) how you would use your time at the Residency, (2) the relevance of New York City to your proposed project, and (3) how living/working on Governors Island may benefit your work. (maximum 500 words)
- **Research proposal:** Summary of the research work or design proposal to be developed during the Residency program. Work can be an ongoing or new endeavor. (maximum 500 words)
- **References:** Two references with full name and current email addresses. Recommendation letters are not required.
- **CV:** Curriculum vitae. (PDF format, maximum 5MB)
- **Work samples:** Relevant research or work samples and/or portfolio. (PDF format, maximum 10MB)

## Program fee

The Residency Program Fee is \$5,000 per Fellow for the 11-week period, which includes registration, accommodations, and other program expenses. Fellows are encouraged to seek partial or full financial support from their institutions or other funding sources to offset the program fee. The fee can be paid in a lump sum or in installments. If paid in installments, the first 50% is due prior to the start of the program on June 1, with an additional 25% due on July 1 and the remaining balance of 25% due on August 1.

## Stipends

We understand that the Program Fee might be a barrier to entry for some applicants. The IPA offers a limited number of need-based stipends. If you are interested in applying for a stipend, please submit the general application form and then send an email to [info@the-ipa.org](mailto:info@the-ipa.org) explaining your situation. The aim of this stipend offer is to address systemic barriers that some applicants may face. Any information submitted will remain confidential, for the use of the IPA in determining applicant's need for financial support only.

## Conclusion

At the end of the Residency, Fellows' work will be exhibited at the Block House and submitted to the IPA for an upcoming publication. Fellows should expect to receive feedback from invited guests. As an independent program, no official qualifications or diplomas are awarded.

## Vehicle Access

Governors Island is a predominately car-free space, with very limited vehicle access. Fellows will not be able to bring or use a vehicle on the Island during the Residency period. There are no stores on Governors Island; all groceries and other items must be purchased on the mainland and brought to the Island. A list of local grocery stores, pharmacies and other retailers will be provided upon arrival.

## Note

Materials submitted for and resulting from the Residency may be retained for use by the IPA for exhibition, publication, and promotional purposes, without compensation. The Fellow will retain full copyright of all materials resulting from the Residency unless otherwise stated. The IPA will not be held liable for any damages, errors or omissions. By participating in the program, Fellows agree to be photographed and/or filmed and give permission to use their likeness in promotional and/or marketing materials.

## Inquiries:

[info@the-ipa.org](mailto:info@the-ipa.org)



## The Block House

Fellows will live and work in a landmarked Greek Revival building designed in the 1840s by architect Martin E. Thompson. During the decades during which Governors Island was a U.S. military base, the Block House served as a General's headquarters, Officers' quarters and hospital. The Block House contributes to the vibrant, culturally diverse and verdant Nolan Park and is one of the oldest structures on the Island.

The IPA has restored and equipped the Block House to support the Summer Fellow cohort and create a productive environment for living and working. Fellows will have access to:

- A private bedroom with individual climate control, with a full (double) bed, pillows and sheets, a personal desk and chair, lockable cabinet and storage space.
- A shared bathroom and in-house laundry with washer and dryer.
- A fully-equipped shared kitchen and dining room with a standard oven, fridge, microwave, blender, and tableware.
- Common workspaces and living areas.
- Outdoor areas adjacent to the house with tables, chairs and open space.
- 24-hour security and in-house program and facilities staff.
- Proximity to more than twenty arts, cultural, educational, and environmental nonprofit organizations-in-residence on the Island.
- Complimentary transportation to and from the Island via ferry service from Lower Manhattan and West Brooklyn with access to public transportation connections to major transportation hubs.

## Island Life

Governors Island is a 172-acre island in the heart of New York Harbor. Just minutes from Lower Manhattan and the Brooklyn waterfront by ferry, the Island is a popular destination open to visitors year-round. An award-winning park by landscape architecture firm West 8 complements the Island's historic buildings, educational and cultural facilities, rich arts and culture programs, and 22-acre National Monument. The Island features expansive open space, playgrounds, a series of dining and food-truck options, historic sites, trails, kayak and bicycle rentals, an urban farm, athletic fields, birdwatching, and sweeping views of the New York and New Jersey skylines.

The Block House is currently the only building on Governors Island that supports short-term overnight accommodations for cultural and academic purposes. As such, Fellows will enjoy exclusive access to the Island beyond its regular operating hours. Fellows are encouraged to take advantage of the many events, exhibitions, lectures, sports competitions, workshops and festivals throughout the Summer on the Island (some as close as the Block House front yard).

Current tenants include the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Urban Assembly New York Harbor School, Billion Oyster Project, Beam Center, Shandaken Projects, QC New York Spa, Buttermilk Labs, Earth Works and many more seasonal organizations-in-residence.



## Governors Island

The Island was referred to as Paggank (Nut Island) by the indigenous Lenape of the Manhattan region, after its plentiful hickory, oak and chestnut trees. With the arrival of the Dutch West India Company in 1624, the Island was confiscated and renamed “Noten Eylandt” and a small fort and sawmill was constructed. In 1664 the English captured New Amsterdam and took Nutten Island (the British mispronunciation of the Island) transforming it into a fort and garrison, eventually renaming it Governors Island and reserving it for the “benefit and accommodation of His Majesty’s Governors.”

After the American Revolution, the State of New York took control of the Island as part of an effort to fortify coastal defenses and constructed Fort Jay. In 1800, New York transferred the Island to the US government for military use. In 1966, the Island was transferred to the US Coast Guard, becoming a self-contained residential community with a population of over 3,000. As a cost cutting measure, the Coast Guard closed its facilities and relocated all personnel in 1996. In 2003, the Island was transferred back to the City and State of New York, with a provision that it be used for the public benefit. Today three entities act as stewards and advocates for the Island: The Trust for Governors Island, the National Park Service and the Friends of Governors Island.

## About the IPA

The Institute for Public Architecture believes in a future in which design is used as a tool for facilitating social justice and the public has a voice in all decisions that shape our built environment. We use design to challenge social and physical inequities in our cities. We address urgent issues of design and policy by mobilizing our network of design activists, professionals, government officials and community stakeholders. IPA’s collaborative process involves a focused place-based design residency and related public programming that engages specialists in the field and members of the public, alike. In addition, the IPA records and promotes this work through exhibitions and publications.