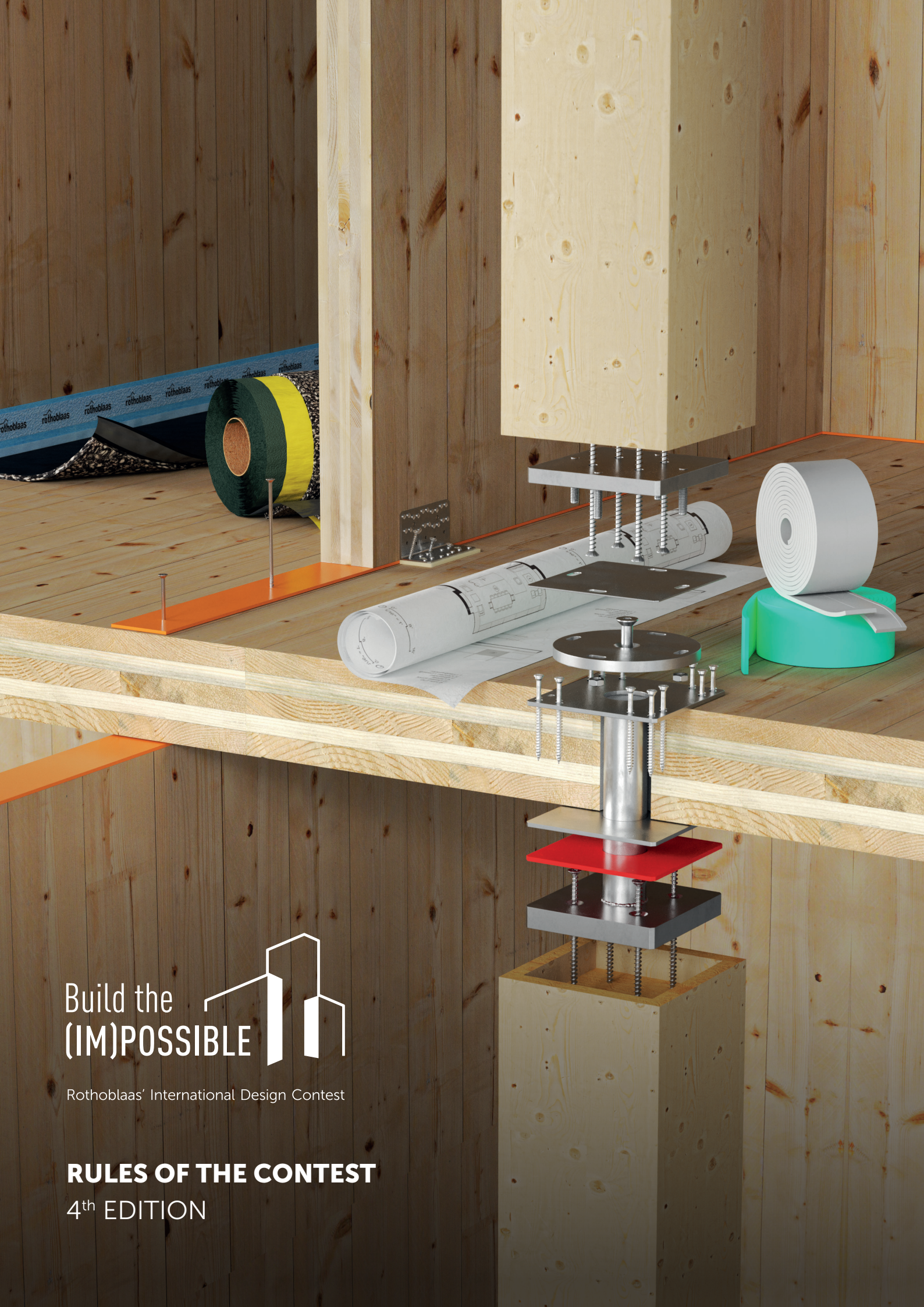


Build the (IM)POSSIBLE

Rothoblaas' International Design Contest

RULES OF THE CONTEST

4th EDITION

Build the (IM)POSSIBLE

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RULES OF THE CONTEST
4th EDITION

INTRODUCTION

Working with timber is a meaningful, possible and sustainable project.

Building using such a noble material helps dispel myths about the supposed weaknesses of timber compared to more traditional materials such as reinforced concrete and steel, reducing the ecological footprint of the building sector.
Engineered timber (glulam, LVL, CLT, etc.) has, over time, made it possible to overcome many building constraints and plays a key role in advancing low-carbon construction. When used correctly, timber can store more carbon dioxide than is emitted during its harvesting, processing, transportation and assembly for the construction of a building.
Promoting timber construction serves the public interest not only in terms of environmental sustainability, but also through shorter construction times, greater design flexibility and improved living comfort.

Rothoblaas has been providing timber building solutions for more than 30 years and is involved in the dissemination of wood culture by organising courses, seminars and training weeks dedicated to the in-depth study of the most contemporary topics in timber technology.
BUILD THE (IM)POSSIBLE also moves in this direction and is a contest created to broaden the community of professionals dedicated to the development of more sustainable building.
Taking part in the contest means contributing to the advancement of timber technology for more sustainable, modern construction capable of delivering ever-higher standards of living comfort. **Today, designing safe, high-performance buildings means reconciling two fundamental, often conflicting requirements: structural performance and acoustic comfort. The connections that enable structural elements to withstand loads can also become paths for noise transmission.**
The challenge is to strike the right balance between connection and isolation, turning a technical challenge into a design opportunity. This vision is precisely the foundation of this year's BUILD THE (IM)POSSIBLE contest.

Join in.

AIM OF THE CONTEST

BUILD THE (IM)POSSIBLE is more than just a contest. It is an international platform that gives visibility to ideas with the potential to shape the future of timber construction.
"Building the impossible" is now possible thanks to the development of new technologies which have given new impetus to **timber as a structural material**.
In today's world scene, there is a growing awareness of respect for the environment, society and healthier, more conscious lifestyles. In this context, living comfort becomes very important.

The contest aims to recognise and promote innovative design proposals that stand out for both their design approach and their contribution to environmental sustainability and the wider public interest.

In its first two editions, the contest explored two innovative timber construction systems: the first was the **post-and-slab** system, involving the use of SPIDER and PILLAR connectors; the second was the **post-**

and-beam system, introducing the revolutionary ALUMEGA connection. Both editions pushed timber to its highest engineering potential, demonstrating its ability to compete with traditional materials. The third edition further broadened the scope of the contest, focusing on hybrid structures and the interaction between timber, steel, concrete and other construction materials.
This year, **the fourth edition** addresses a new challenge**: the relationship between structural performance and acoustic comfort in timber construction**. Designing high-performance buildings requires striking the right balance between seemingly conflicting needs: connecting structural elements to ensure strength and safety, while isolating them to limit vibration transmission and improve acoustic performance.
Participants are invited to develop solutions that reconcile these two fundamental aspects of modern construction, demonstrating how innovation, sustainability and comfort can be brought together in a single design. It is precisely by balancing structural and acoustic performance that solutions once considered (im) possible are now becoming a reality.

Now, it's your turn: imagine, design and participate in the fourth edition of BUILD THE (IM)POSSIBLE.

PARTICIPATION CRITERIA

Constraints
The contest is open to projects involving **buildings with a predominantly timber load-bearing structure, designed with particular attention to achieving a balance between structural performance and acoustic comfort.**

Each project must incorporate at least one Rothoblaas product for structural connections between elements and at least one Rothoblaas product designed to improve the acoustic performance of timber structures. Particular consideration will be given to solutions that address acoustic performance through integrated design strategies, prioritising structural decoupling over the addition of linings or remedial layers, while complying with applicable performance requirements.

Permitted project types
Projects may be submitted in all phases:
- preliminary design;
- final design;
- executive design;
- projects under construction;
- completed projects.

ADDRESSEES

The contest is open to anyone working in the **construction industry, particularly those with an interest in timber construction**, **structural design and building comfort**.

Participation is open worldwide, with no geographical restrictions. This contest offers all those interested an opportunity to tackle one of the most pressing challenges in timber construction: achieving the right balance between structural performance and acoustic behaviour, combining technical innovation, sustainability and design quality.

The evolution of building systems, innovation and progress requires input from various industry players. **This considered, the contest is structured into two categories of participants:**

1. ***Designers and builders***
   Those who drive innovation, designing and constructing buildings that test new possibilities in real-world conditions, navigating the regulatory, urban planning, logistical and budget constraints of an actual construction site.
2. ***Students and academics***
   Those who, working on paper, hypothesise, investigate and dream big but without necessarily implementing the project. These are students, PhD students, researchers or university professors.

Four finalists will be selected (two per category), from whom **two winners** will be chosen based on the originality and effectiveness of their design solutions.

This approach seeks to encourage collaboration between industry experts and emerging talent, bringing together experience and innovative ideas. The aim is to promote a vision of the future of construction that prioritises higher performance, sustainability and personal well-being, demonstrating how structural performance and acoustic comfort can be successfully integrated into a single design.

** If the jury determines that selecting two finalists per category is not feasible, four finalists will be chosen regardless of category.*

NATURE AND VALUE OF THE PRIZE

Winning the contest means first of all making direct contact with the international community specialising in the timber construction sector.

The selected projects will be an inspiration for other future projects that, we hope, will be just as sustainable and of *interest to the community*.

FINALIST PROJECTS

The four selected projects will advance to the BUILD THE (IM)POSSIBLE final, which will take place during the Mass Timber Seminar International 2027. At the event, the designers of the finalist projects will present their work to the jury and the audience, whose votes will contribute to the selection of the two winners.

Each of the four finalists will receive the following:

- **Participation in the Mass Timber Seminar International 2027**, an event dedicated to key topics, technologies and trends in the timber construction industry. The Mass Timber Seminar International is Rothoschool's flagship international event, bringing together around 100 professionals from across the world each year. Participation includes meals and accommodation for the duration of the seminar, as well as a contribution towards return travel expenses from the participant's country of origin, arranged by Rothoblaas.

- **Participation in International Holzbau Forum 2027**: one-day admission ticket to the International Holzbau Forum (International Wood Construction Conference IHF) 2027 in Innsbruck, one of the leading in-

ternational events dedicated to timber construction, attracting over 2,900 participants from 40 countries and more than 200 industry partners and exhibitors each year.

THE WINNING PROJECTS

From the European stage to the global timber construction network

The two winning projects, and the professionals behind them, will benefit from international recognition and promotional activities, including:

- official recognition during the Mass Timber Seminar International 2027
- publication of an article on the Rothoblaas blog featuring the winning project and the reasons for its selection
- publication of dedicated content on Rothoblaas social media channels, showcasing the project and its designer
- a dedicated section on the Rothoblaas website for one year
- official BUILD THE (IM)POSSIBLE 2027 trophy.

Only the first-place winner in the "Designers and Builders" category will also receive:

- Admission for two people to the Mass Timber Conference in Portland (**masstimberconference.com**), the world's leading event dedicated to timber construction. The package also includes two nights' accommodation (arranged by Rothoblaas).

LIABILITY WAIVER

In the event that exceptional and/or unforeseeable events directly or indirectly affect the prize, award ceremony and/or other contest-related meetings, Rotho Blaas SRL will promptly inform all participants of any changes in the schedule (cancellations, modifications, delays). In such a case, the participants will be responsible for eventual own incurred costs, and will not be entitled to compensation from Rotho Blaas SRL.

CONTEST STEPS

The contest is structured into the following steps:

Step 1
REGISTRATION AND COLLECTION OF ALL PROJECTS
Registration is possible from **01/12/2026**.
The deadline for registration and project submission is 19/09/2027.

During this step, the contest will be promoted at the most prestigious trade fairs in the timber construction industry.

Step 2
PROJECT SELECTION
From 20/09/2027 to 08/10/2027, the jury (see the "Jury Composition" section) will meet for the preliminary selection of projects. The finalists will be selected according to set criteria (see the "Evaluation Criteria" paragraph). The jury will communicate the reasons for selecting the finalist projects.

Four finalists will then be selected and invited to participate in the Rothoblaas Mass Timber Seminar International 2027.

Step 3
PRESENTATION OF FINALIST PROJECTS AND AWARD CEREMONY
On 11 October 2027, the jury will announce the four finalist projects, whose designers will be invited to attend the Mass Timber Seminar International 2027 at Rothoblaas headquarters.
During the event, each finalist will have 10 minutes to present their project. Following the presentations, the jury will officially announce the two winning projects.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

Applications
To apply for BUILD THE (IM)POSSIBLE you must complete the application form (subject to acceptance of the stated policies).
It is not necessary to upload all the material at the time of registration.

File uploading
The deadline for uploading material to the "File submission area" section of the website is 19/09/2027. Applications received after the indicated date will not be considered.

DOCUMENTATION TO BE PROVIDED

For the purposes of evaluating the project, the following documents are required:
Summary documents
The summary submission **documents are mandatory** and will form the primary basis for the jury's assessment. They must provide a clear and comprehensive overview of the design concept, structural design choices and acoustic strategies adopted.

1. Presentation board (ISO A2 – pdf or jpg, in English)
One presentation board in ISO A2 format (landscape or portrait), illustrating the project and how it addresses the trade-off between structural connection and acoustic decoupling. Short texts (in English) may be included. Particular consideration will be given to schematics, diagrams and concise visual representations that enable a rapid understanding of the design strategies adopted and the balance achieved between structural and acoustic requirements. The drawing must include at least:
- 1 floor plan
- 1 elevation
- 1 rendering or 1 photograph
- 1 comprehensive section drawing clearly showing the structural system adopted (e.g. timber frame, CLT, post-and-beam, etc.)
- construction details or key connections illustrating how Rothoblaas products are used to address structural and acoustic challenges.

2. Project report (2 A4 page – PDF)
The design report may be written in the participant's preferred language and must provide the information required for assessment according to the contest criteria (see the “Assessment Criteria” section).
The report must include:
- description of the works, location and main geometric data (number of storeys, building volume, floor plan);

- structural design choices: description of the load-bearing system and rationale behind the design choices
- acoustic performance: description of the strategies adopted to achieve acoustic decoupling and acoustic comfort
- integration of architecture, structure and acoustic performance: challenges addressed and solutions adopted
- contribution of Rothoblaas products to the project's structural and acoustic performance

3. Participant information form (1-2 A4 pages – PDF in English)

One A4 document (in English), in PDF format, containing**:**

- designer's data;
- details of the manufacturer (if defined);
- details of the client;
- a valid ID of the registered participant;
- contact person for interviews.

Note: For academic projects, the project site and client may be hypothetical.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

Additional materials do not replace the mandatory summary submission documents and will only be reviewed by the jury if further information is required.
Participants may submit supplementary materials to help explain their project, such as photographs, renderings, sketches, 3D views, additional 2D technical drawings, experimental test results, etc.
PDF files and high-resolution JPEG images are preferable. Other file formats may be accepted, provided they are easy to access and review. To facilitate the jury's work, participants are requested to limit the volume of submitted materials to what is strictly necessary to understand the project. The jury reserves the right to disregard materials that are redundant, excessively large or do not provide information relevant to the assessment.

COMPOSITION OF THE JURY

Projects will be assessed by an international jury comprising recognised experts in structural engineering, acoustics and timber architecture. Jury members will have no direct affiliation with Rothoblaas. During the evaluation process, the jury will be supported by two Rothoblaas staff members, in charge of handling only the materials and logistics. The selection of finalists will be entirely at the jury's discretion.
If any submitted project is connected in any capacity to the professional practice, company or organisation with which a jury member is affiliated, that jury member will not participate in the assessment of the project concerned or in any related discussions or decisions.

EVALUATION/SELECTION CRITERIA

The jury will assess the projects based on the following criteria:

1. Balancing structural and acoustic performance

The challenge of the contest is to strike the right balance between two often conflicting requirements: ensuring the structural continuity needed to provide the building with adequate strength, while limiting

vibration transmission to improve acoustic comfort.
The jury will assess how effectively each project reconciles structural connections with acoustic decoupling, while complying with any applicable standards and performance requirements. Particular consideration will be given to the informed and well-justified selection of Rothoblaas solutions.

2. Integrated design
Projects that integrate architecture, structure and acoustics into a coherent design strategy, turning a potential technical constraint into a design opportunity, will be particularly valued. Particular attention will be given to solutions that address acoustic performance directly within the structural system through structural decoupling, rather than relying primarily on additional linings or remedial layers.
Rothoblaas solutions make it possible to address vibration transmission directly at its source, improving acoustic performance without compromising structural performance. This approach can facilitate the use of exposed load-bearing timber elements, such as CLT walls or floors, reducing the need for additional finishes and making the most of the material's architectural potential.

3. Responsible use of materials
The jury will assess how effectively each project reduces environmental impact through the predominant use of timber in structural elements and the efficient use of resources. Particular consideration will be given to projects that justify their choice of products with reference to environmental impact and adopt design solutions that achieve the required performance while using fewer materials, construction layers or resources.

4. Additional technical information (optional)
Any simulations, calculations, measurements, experimental tests, certifications or other documents supporting the technical design choices will be viewed favourably. Such additional information is not a mandatory requirement for participation but will contribute to a better understanding and validation of the proposed design.

SELECTION OF FINALISTS AND WINNERS

The jury will select the four finalist projects based on the assessment criteria set out in these contest rules. The four finalists will present their projects during the Mass Timber Seminar International 2027. Following the presentations, the audience will be invited to vote for their preferred projects.
The two winning projects will be determined by combining the scores awarded by the technical jury (70%) with the votes cast by the audience at the Mass Timber Seminar International 2027 (30%). Scores will be normalised and weighted to ensure that the specified percentages are applied.

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EXCLUSION FROM ITALIAN PRESIDENTIAL DECREE 430/2001:

This contest is excluded from the scope of application of Presidential Decree 430/2001 "Regulations concerning the organic revision of the discipline of contests and prize-winning operations, as well as local events of chance, pursuant to article 19, paragraph 4, of Law no. 449 of 27 December 1997". By virtue of the characteristics defined in these Contest Rules, the contest in question is in fact one of the cases of exclusion referred to in art.6, letter a): it is a contest for the presentation of a project in a commercial/industrial context, in which the awarding of the prize to the author of the work represents recognition of personal merit and an encouragement in the interest of the community.

USE OF PHOTOS, IMAGES AND PROJECT MATERIALS

Participants grant Rothoblaas a free, non-exclusive licence to use any photographs and/or images of their projects (the "Images") that are shared with Rothoblaas or that Rothoblaas may otherwise obtain. This includes the right to capture additional images at the time of submission, exhibition or any other use of the projects. This authorisation includes the possibility to use the Images for research, archiving, reference or service illustration purposes, as well as to copy, reproduce, modify, transmit, publish and distribute the Images in both digital and print formats (across all currently known media and any that may be developed in the future) for both commercial and non-commercial purposes. The authorisation is granted without time or geographical limitations and remains valid even after the expiration or termination of the agreement between the parties.

PRIVACY POLICY

This Privacy Policy has been written by the data controller in compliance with Article 13 of Reg. EU 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation).

DATA CONTROLLER

ROTHO BLAAS SRL, with registered offices at Via dell'Adige 2/1, I-39040 Cortaccia (BZ), Italy, VAT No. IT 01433490214, is the Data Controller for the personal data you have provided. If you wish to make a report, or if you have any requests or wish to exercise the rights referred to in Article 15 et seq. of EU Regulation 679/2016, please contact our Privacy Representative by e-mail at the following address: privacy@rothoblaas.com.

TYPE OF DATA PROCESSED, PURPOSES OF DATA PROCESSING AND LEGAL BASIS

Participation in the contest requires the provision of consent to the processing of the following personal data:

A) Personal and commercial data: name, surname, e-mail, address of residence, profession.
B) Images and videos

The purpose of the processing for the data referred to in section A is the:
- identification and admission of candidates to the "BUILD THE (IM)POSSIBLE" contest;
- the sending and receiving of communications relating to the organisation of the "BUILD THE (IM)POSSIBLE" contest;
- Be contacted for further information and interviews in order to promote the "BUILD THE (IM)POSSIBLE" contest.

The purpose of the processing for the data referred to in section B is for documentation and advertising purposes: by consenting to making photos and videos, the participant agrees that Rotho Blaas will use photos and videos provided by the user or made before, during and immediately after the event, and their subsequent use free of charge for advertising purposes.

The legal basis for the processing is the fulfilment of contractual obligations and the consent of the data subject.

NATURE OF THE PROVISION OF THE DATA

The User is at liberty to provide the personal data listed in the application to participate in the contest form. Failure to provide the data that is identified as mandatory, however, does not allow admission to the "BUILD THE (IM)POSSIBLE" contest. Failure to provide data that is identified as optional, on the other hand, could lead to the provision of an incomplete service.

DISCLOSURE AND DISSEMINATION OF DATA TO THIRD PARTIES

In order to fulfil the specified objectives, some data may be disclosed to Group companies; external parties/companies to whom the disclosure of the personal data proves to be necessary or, in any case, functional for the purpose of performing the requested service or for the management of the contractual relationship with the data subject (hosting companies or services companies and/or professionals providing services for the management of commercial communications) under the control of the Data Controller.

The data controller will disseminate the personal data provided by the above-mentioned User through its web communication channels and in paper format, both in the context of the contest and for the awarding of the prize and for the effective performance of the promotional and marketing activities preceding, concomitant and subsequent to the contest itself.

TRANSFER TO THIRD COUNTRIES

The personal data provided by the data subject may be processed or transferred to a country outside the EU for the above-mentioned purposes in accordance with the applicable legislation in relation to the transfer of data to Third Countries and the relative guarantees as provided therein (Article 44 et seq. of EU Regulation No. 679/2016).

DATA PROCESSING METHODS AND RETENTION TIMES

Data processing of the gathered data is carried out through computerised procedures or, in any case, by digital means by internal or external parties specifically appointed and authorised for such purpose and committed to confidentiality terms. Data is processed and stored using appropriate tools to ensure its safety, integrity and confidentiality through the adoption of adequate security measures.

In particular, communications relating to the contest are sent by e-mail to the addresses provided by the participants.

The personal data provided by the concerned party will be kept for a period of 10 years after the award ceremony.

RIGHTS OF DATA SUBJECTS

The data subject may, at any time, exercise their rights, find out about the data that concerns them, how it was acquired, receive information about the parties or classification of parties to whom their data may be disclosed, verify that their data is accurate, complete, current and safeguarded, receive their data in a commonly used structured format, readable on an automated device, revoke any consent given at any time to process their data, request its deletion, and fully or partially oppose the use of their data. In addition, data subjects shall have the right to revoke consent at any time without prejudice to the legality of the processing based on consent provided before revocation and to file a complaint with the applicable authority, the Italian Data Protection Authority (Garante per la Protezione dei Dati Personali), should they believe that the processing of their data is in violation of the above-mentioned Regulation.

Rotho Blaas SRL is the PROMOTOR of the contest.

FAQ

The project submitted shall only include Rothoblaas products?
The exclusive use of Rothoblaas products is not a requirement for evaluation. However, the project must incorporate **at least one Rothoblaas product for structural connections and at least one Rothoblaas product designed to improve acoustic performance**. Both must make a significant contribution to achieving the project's objectives. Visit the "Resources" section to download materials on the required products.

Is it possible to participate with a project already carried out?
Yes, participation is open to completed projects. Revised or reinterpreted designs of existing buildings are also eligible, provided they are consistent with the contest theme.

Will there be an award ceremony?
The award ceremony will be held during the Mass Timber Seminar International 2027 at our headquarters in Cortaccia (BZ).

If I am part of a study group/company/technical firm, is the prize awarded to me or to all the members?
The prize will be awarded to those who submit the project through the contest entry form.

Who will choose the winners?
The technical jury selects the four finalists. The two winners are chosen based on a combination of the technical jury's assessment and the votes cast by the audience at the Mass Timber Seminar International 2027, in accordance with the procedures set out in the contest rules.

I need assistance, how can I contact you?
For all questions regarding the contest, contact buildtheimpossible@rothoblaas.com

Is it possible to contact one of your consultants if I have any doubts about the project I am carrying out?
For technical questions related to design aspects, please write to buildtheimpossible@rothoblaas.com

Is there a weight limit of the uploaded ZIP file?
While there are no file size restrictions, participants are encouraged to upload files that are suitably sized for efficient review by the jury.

What kind of files are allowed for uploading?
PDF files and high-resolution JPEG images are preferable. However, there are no technical constraints for the use of other formats.

Are acoustic measurements or certifications required?
No. Experimental testing or certifications are not mandatory. However, simulations, calculations, test results or other technical analyses supporting the design decisions may help the jury gain a better understanding of the project.