

E¹⁸ Lahti (FI)

How to re-imagine the Sports Centre as an activity hub while reinforcing it as a premier event venue?

Scale XL/S

Team composition: Architect non mandatory

Location: Lahti Sports Centre

Population: 120 000 inhabitants

Reflection Site: 495 hectares

Project site: 32,5 hectares

Site proposed by: City of Lahti

Actors involved: City of Lahti

Owner(s) of the site: City of Lahti

The City of Lahti intends to commission the winner(s) at the level of detailed planning and / or landscape and construction design for the prompt measures related to major events in the coming years, such as the Nordic World Ski Championships in 2029. The commission will include further development of the winning proposal's ideas and collaboration with the city and local stakeholders to improve the character and potential of the area.



SITE / CONTEXT

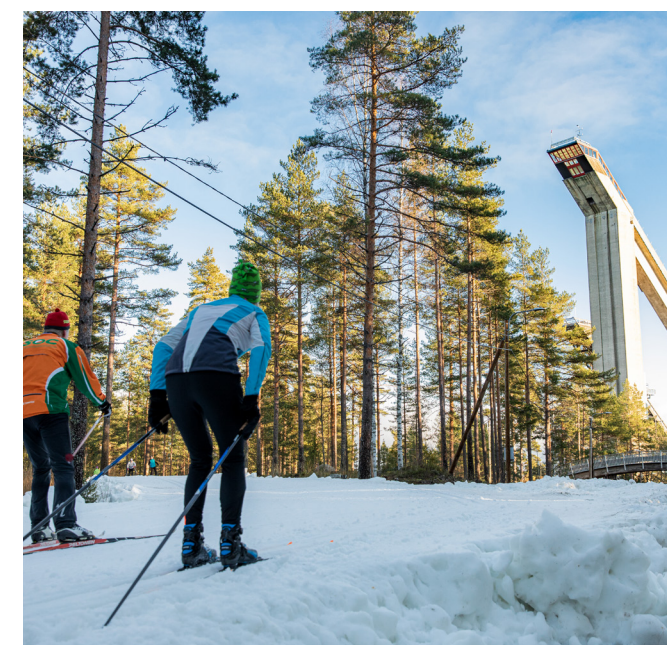
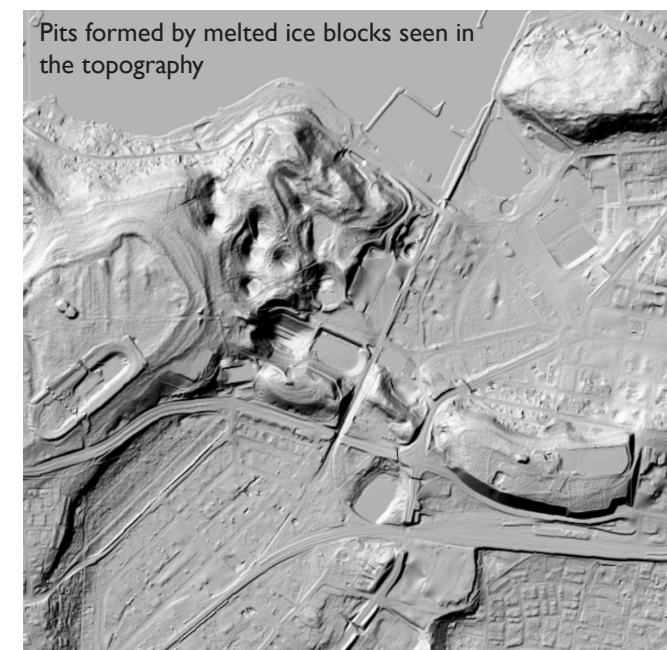
The Lahti Sports Centre is the internationally renowned heart of Nordic skiing games and winter events in Finland. Besides being a popular year-round destination for tourism, the diverse sports facilities make the site the most visited place for everyday recreation and exercise for Lahti residents.

Following a new City Centre Vision 2040 the City of Lahti is looking for an overall plan for the Sports Centre that boldly combines different functional objectives while respecting the existing values of the environment. The plans should provide a pleasant environment for everyday activities and an ambitious image for a venue that will be seen on TV cameras around the world during major events.

The three ski jumping towers, built on a natural hillside, are a signature feature of Lahti. The Sports Centre plays a significant role in terms of the cityscape acting as the western boundary of the urban core and uniquely marking the end of the city's main street axis. The area of the ski jumping towers and stadium is recognized as a nationally valuable heritage site. This classification applies also to the adjacent 1950s urban area to the east and the Radio Hill region to the southwest.

The current towers and main grandstand date back to the 1970s, as well as the overall appearance of the area. The landing pit of the highest tower has been used as an open-air swimming pool in the summer, also with concerts and outdoor cinema nights held in the natural amphitheater formed by the slopes. Along with the Trade Fair and Sports Hall, the Ice Hockey Hall and the Ski Museum, the Sports Centre offers parking for 400 vehicles, which dominate the open spaces between the venues.

The Centre is located next to UNESCO Global Geopark, which is part of the Salpausselkä ridge. Stretching over 600 km, the ridge consists of rock and gravel deposited by glaciers 12,000 years ago, making it one of Finland's most significant and best-known geological formations. In winter, lighted ski tracks cross the forest, and in summer, the area features mountain biking and hiking trails.





How can the services needed for major events also enhance everyday activities and cultivate a vibrant environment for locals, tourists, and visitors?

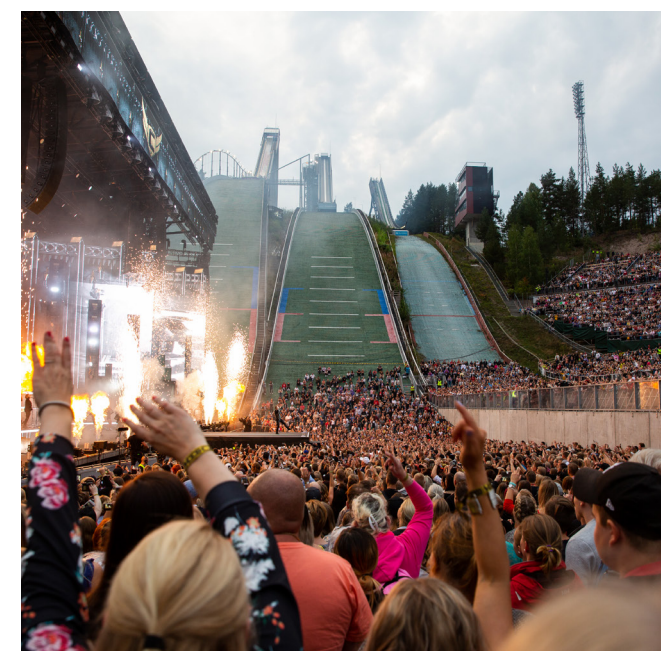


QUESTIONS TO THE COMPETITORS

The competition aims to establish a vision for enhancing the spatial quality of the site while fostering a dynamic blend of professional sporting events, leisure activities, and community engagement. How can the design leverage the area's unique natural setting, the distinctive geomorphology of Salpausselkä, its rich cultural history, and the seamless integration of sports and recreation within an urban environment?

Another key objective is to develop plans for immediate improvements to the visitor orientation of the area in preparation for the 2029 Nordic World Ski Championships. How can these initial steps create a foundation for a long-lasting vision?

How can the core of the site be transformed into an inviting, pedestrian-friendly hub at the heart of the Sports Centre? What improvements are needed for the main access points? How can a cohesive vegetation concept enhance the spatial quality of central pedestrian areas and better integrate the built environment with Salpausselkä's natural landscape? How should the demand for new sports and amenity buildings be addressed, and how can the relationship between these structures and public spaces be best considered?



How can the Sports Centre's activities better promote a sustainable and active lifestyle for all, and how can sustainability in implementation be ensured through circular economy principles?