

Coveted TED prize goes to city of the future

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TED for the first time awarded its coveted annual prize to an idea instead of a person, naming the smart city of the future as winner of the prestigious group's backing.

"This year, we're challenging everyone in the TED Community to embrace radical collaboration on one of the most pressing issues we face: how to build sustainable, vibrant, working cities," said TED prize director Amy Novogratz.

Prize winners are given \$100,000 and a promise from TED's accomplished and innovative community to help grant a wish aimed at improving the world.

"By tapping the brain trust of the remarkable TED community, we can engage the world in identifying new and innovative platforms around urbanization," Novogratz said in an online post.

"It is not a utopian dream, but a real-world upgrade that harnesses the globe's collective wisdom," she added.

A "City 2.0" wish will be revealed on February 29 during a [TED conference](#) in the Southern California city of Long Beach.

"The City 2.0 to us means the [city](#) of the future -- one in which more than 10 billion people must somehow live sustainably," Novogratz said.

Last year's TED prize went to French street artist JR, who used his wish

to launch a global Inside Out Project to let people tell their stories in giant self-portraits plastered on any open surfaces.

Anyone with Internet access can take pictures of faces with "strong" expressions and upload them to the website insideoutproject.net.

JR and his crew convert the images into large black-and-white posters and send real world copies back to people, who are supposed to plaster them somewhere for all to see.

"The rest is about action," JR told AFP at the project launch. "It is about taking the [virtual world](#) back to the streets."

JR is known for using bleak streets in cities across the globe as frames for poignant portraits of people who live there.

TED is known for its mix of brilliant, creative people and annual conferences that attract members ranging from celebrities and politicians to Nobel Prize winners and founders of Internet titans such as Google and Amazon.

Videos of "TED talks" presented at the nonprofit's mind-bending gatherings have a global online following at ted.com.

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