

DESIGN FOR HUMANITY JOURNAL – ISSUE 1 CALL

Designing for Displacement

From Emergency Response to Mobility Systems and Belonging

Milestone	Date
Call opens	10 September 2026
Abstract / proposal deadline	31 October 2026
Full contribution deadline	15 January 2027
Issue 1 publication	30 May 2027

INVITATION Where humanitarian practice, design, research and lived experience meet. We invite grounded ideas, cases, studies, visual arguments, dialogues and critical resources that help the field understand what responsible design means in displacement contexts.

About the Journal

The Design for Humanity Journal is a biannual, open-access initiative of the Institute of International Humanitarian Affairs at Fordham University. It connects humanitarian practice, academic research, design inquiry, policy debate and visual evidence. The Journal welcomes practitioners, researchers, designers, technologists, students, artists, public authorities, refugee- and migrant-led organisations, community organisations and people with lived experience. No university affiliation is required, and interdisciplinary and co-authored proposals are welcome. There are no submission or publication fees.

Issue 1 focus

Issue 1 examines displacement as a systems question rather than a shelter-only problem. It asks how physical, spatial, service, informational and institutional design shapes routes, arrival, access, protection, habitability, tenure, public infrastructure, data exposure and long-term belonging for displaced people and host communities. We especially welcome contributions that make decision processes, power, evidence, limitations and transferable learning visible.

Submission tracks

- Arrival, access and urban incorporation
- Route-based support and temporal infrastructures
- Planned relocation, retreat and mobility governance
- From shelter to dwelling: habitability, tenure and service ecosystems
- Shared urban commons and host-community infrastructure
- Urban protection and civilian infrastructure in conflict
- Habitability under climate and public-health stress

- Information design, GIS and remote sensing without harm
- Co-design under constraint and participatory decision architectures
- Measuring dignity, agency and belonging

Contribution formats

Format	Full contribution	Essential elements	Review route
Research & Innovation	3,000–6,000 words	Methods, references, limitations and plain-language summary.	Editorial; optional peer review
Case Study / Field Report	1,500–3,500 words	Context, actions, outcomes, trade-offs and ethics note; visuals encouraged.	Editorial; selected community commentary
Dialogue / Interview	1,500–2,500 words	Clear framing, consent and practice takeaway.	Editorial
Design Showcase / Visual Essay	800–1,500 words + visuals	Captions, permissions, context, provenance and visual-ethics note.	Editorial; selected community commentary
Emerging Voices	800–1,500 words	Clear contribution and relevance; developmental support where feasible.	Editorial / developmental
Reviews & Resources	500–1,000 words	Accurate description, critical assessment and practical orientation.	Editorial

What a strong proposal will show

- A clear contribution: what is learned, tested, questioned or made transferable.
- Evidence appropriate to the proposed format, with an honest account of limitations and at least one explicit trade-off where relevant.
- A practical insight that another practitioner, community or institution could assess or adapt.
- Ethical attention to dignity, consent, safeguarding, data sensitivity and visual or location risk.
- A feasible permissions and co-authorship plan where community knowledge, images or institutional material are involved.
- A contribution to a balanced issue across regions, disciplines, forms of expertise and lived experience.

How to submit an abstract / proposal

DEADLINE Email the complete proposal by 31 October 2026 to d4hjourn@fordham.edu. A full manuscript is not required at this stage.

For the first stage, the abstract and proposal are one structured document of 300–500 words, excluding the title, author details, biographies and short reference list. Submit one file only.

Required proposal contents

- **Working title.** A concise title that clearly signals the subject and contribution.

- **Track and format.** Identify one preferred submission track and one contribution format from the lists above.
- **Abstract / proposal (300–500 words).** State the question or problem, context, central contribution, evidence or material to be used, practical relevance, and why the contribution matters for Issue 1.
- **Limits and responsibilities.** Identify at least one trade-off or limitation and briefly address ethics, safeguarding, data responsibility, consent and any outstanding permissions.
- **Author information.** Give each author's name, affiliation if any, role, email address, country or region of practice/research, and a 50–80-word biography.
- **Language and support.** State the proposed working language and any accessibility, language or developmental-support request.

File and email format

- **Language.** The proposal must include an English version. A translated title and abstract may also be included in another language.
- **File type.** Microsoft Word (.docx) is preferred; an accessible PDF is also accepted. Use an A4 or US Letter page, a readable 11- or 12-point font and standard margins.
- **File name.** Use D4HJ_Issue1_[LeadAuthorSurname]_[ShortTitle]_Proposal.docx (or .pdf).
- **Email subject.** Use: D4H Journal Issue 1 Proposal — [working title].
- **Visual proposals.** A portfolio link or a small number of indicative images may be included in the same file. Do not include confidential or identifying material that could create protection risk.

Submit to: d4hjournal@fordham.edu

Questions: apreato@fordham.edu — Alberto Preato

Review and selection

All proposals, including invited proposals, undergo editorial review. Proposals will be assessed for relevance to Issue 1, clarity and distinctiveness of contribution, quality and appropriateness of evidence, practical value, ethical responsibility, feasibility, and contribution to the overall balance of the issue. Selected case, field and visual contributions may also receive community-informed commentary; selected research may receive optional scholarly peer review where methodological scrutiny or academic positioning warrants it.

SELECTION An invitation to propose, revise or submit a full contribution does not guarantee publication. Applicants will be notified of the proposal outcome by 20 November 2026.

Full contributions

Authors whose proposals are selected will be invited to submit a full contribution by 15 January 2027. The applicable length is shown in the contribution-format table. Detailed contributor guidance will accompany the invitation, including citation style, image and caption specifications, accessibility, rights and licensing, and the revision process.

Language. Full contributions must be submitted in English. Authors are encouraged to provide a translated title and abstract in another relevant language. Multilingual or bilingual contributions may be proposed and will be considered according to editorial capacity.

Accessibility. Use clear headings, descriptive captions and meaningful link text. Selected authors will be asked to provide alt text for visuals and a plain-language summary where appropriate.

Originality, rights, safety and responsible AI

- Contributions must be original or must clearly disclose any prior publication, circulation or substantial overlap.
- Authors remain responsible for accuracy, citations, permissions, consent and the safe handling of people, communities, locations and sensitive data.
- Third-party text, images, maps, diagrams and datasets must be cited and appropriately licensed or permissioned. Community knowledge should be credited and, where appropriate, developed through meaningful co-authorship.
- Any substantive use of generative AI in text, images, data analysis, translation or code must be disclosed. AI tools cannot be listed as authors; human authors remain accountable for verification, originality, confidentiality and all submitted content.
- The Journal may request revision, anonymisation, redaction or withdrawal where avoidable protection, dignity, consent, copyright or data-harm risks remain.

Key dates

Stage	Date
Call opens	10 September 2026
Abstract / proposal submission deadline	31 October 2026
Proposal outcomes and invitations to full submission	By 20 November 2026
Full contribution submission deadline	15 January 2027
Editorial feedback	By 26 February 2027
Revised contributions	By 26 March 2027
Issue 1 publication	30 May 2027

Submission and enquiries

Submit proposals: d4hjourn@fordham.edu — deadline: 31 October 2026

Editorial enquiries: apreato@fordham.edu — Alberto Preato

Learn more: [Design for Humanity at IIHA](#)