Searching for grounding is a sticky, precarious, and stubborn pursuit of our time. In an unpredictable and hybrid world, more focus is needed on how architects can respond to this condition and how young architects can situate themselves within it.

Through grounding, designers come to terms with complex material realities, sociocultural contingencies, and more fundamental ways of being. Although grounding suggests locality, contemporary environments are invariably embedded in global systems that complicate architecture’s relationship with place. Grounding thus means, on one hand, making vital connections to what is already there—materially, socially, and otherwise—and, on the other, contending with placeless, pervasive processes. Navigating the remote and embodied, the nonlocal and local, architecture requires methods of retooling, reappropriation, and transformation to find its grounding.

Engaging with what precedes and underlies, grounding is also about establishing productive contexts for action and bringing design into new orbits of collaboration. Such messy interdependencies pull architecture toward the ground, urging designers to consider contingencies as resources for practice.

This year’s Architectural League Prize reflects on the substance of design’s foundations. How do young architects tether their work and practices to the grounds upon which they design? How can designers respond to the particularities of location and the ubiquity of global forces? What are intentional approaches to and forms of grounding?

Funding
League programs are made possible, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, and the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature. Support is also provided by the Next Generation Fund, an initiative of The Architectural League, the J. Clawson Mills Fund of The Architectural League.

Sponsors of the 2022 League Prize
Tischler und Sohn
Delta Millworks
Judlowe

To view the online exhibition, visit archleague.org/LP22Exhibition
For more information about the winners, exhibition, and lecture series, visit archleague.org/LP22