

## III

*(Notices)***COMMISSION**

Call for proposals for the preservation and memorializing of the largest sub-camp of the Auschwitz complex, the Birkenau camp.

**1. CONTEXT**

In association with The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, plans are now underway to preserve the remains of Birkenau, the heart of the Nazi extermination camp system, and to memorialize the millions of innocent lives that were lost there during the Holocaust. The camp has so far been kept intact, but is widely unpreserved.

**2. PROJECT OVERVIEW**

Currently, no concrete plans have been formulated. The Museum is looking for an experienced preservation firm to spearhead the planning and design process. Given the highly emotional and highly controversial nature of the project, many issues stretching beyond the actual design must be considered.

- With no design restrictions and many options to choose from, the firm must fully understand the implications of the various approaches. For example, a museum atmosphere will have a completely different effect than would keeping the camp in its present state;
- A clear purpose and intention must first be generated. A site dedicated solely to education may not be the correct approach to such a sanctified place;
- Architectural integrity may need to give way to safety and consideration of historical and emotional importance. For example, if visitors find the site too reminiscent of the atrocities committed there, the intended purpose of the museum may not be fully realized, and on the other hand, adding new facilities or memorials to make the site more "visitor friendly" may destroy the sacredness of the site;
- There is much controversy surrounding the preservation of concentration camps and other sites with such ominous pasts, and this project may set a future precedent for preserving all places of historical importance;
- Financial constraints are present. While the Museum and this project are funded by the Polish government and a few outside organizations, the budget is small.

**3. APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

A detailed textual proposal, outlining plans and reasoning, can be submitted to:

The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum  
Attn: Władysław Bartoszewski  
Wieżniów Oswiecimia 20  
32-620 Oswiecim  
Poland

Or faxed to +48 33 843 19 34.

Please, no drawings at this time. We are right now looking for firms with the best ethical approaches to preserving a site of this caliber.