



Press Release

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A Stage for Berlin and the World: “Project Partnership Quartier ICC ” Receives Recommendation for the Redevelopment of the International Congress Center

Since 2014, the International Congress Center (ICC) in Berlin has been operating in a preservation mode. To bring new life into the listed landmark and Berlin’s icon and to create an internationally unique destination for arts, culture and the creative industries with a sustainable long-term perspective, the State of Berlin launched a Europe-wide ICC Concept Proposal Process on 25 November 2024. A decisive milestone has now been reached: an official recommendation for award has been issued in favour of the “Project Partnership Quartier ICC”.

Based on this recommendation, the State of Berlin, acting as the granting authority for the concession, will now offer the project partnership an exclusivity agreement and initiate the subsequent award preparation phase. During this approximately two-year project development period, issues including planning permission, financing, heritage preservation requirements and the further refinement of the operational and usage concept will be addressed.

The “Project Partnership Quartier ICC” brings together leading companies and renowned experts from project development, urban planning, architecture, heritage conservation, arts and cultural management, engineering, construction and project management. Its members are Arup Deutschland GmbH, Coloured Fields GmbH, GRAFT Gesellschaft von Architekten mbH, HOCHTIEF Infrastructure GmbH, ICCA Projektgruppe / Stiftung Kunstforum Berliner Volksbank, KVL Projektmanagement Berlin GmbH, Max Dudler GmbH,

MIB AG Immobilien und Beteiligungen and schneider+schumacher Planungsgesellschaft mbH.

Kai Wegner, Governing Mayor of Berlin: “After many years of stagnation, we have succeeded in creating a viable future for the ICC. The ICC is a Berlin landmark. We want it to become once again a place for art, culture, the creative industries, and exchange and encounter. Messe Berlin will also benefit from this development: A revitalised ICC will strengthen the area around the exhibition grounds and western Berlin as a whole. The recommendation to award the contract is an important first step towards this goal. We will now address all remaining issues, particularly those relating to financing, permits and implementation. I would like to thank the Senator for Economic Affairs, the Senator for Finance and Culture, the Senator for Urban Development, the Senator for Transport, and all participating administrations for their great engagement and cooperation.”

Franziska Giffey, Mayor and Senator for Economic Affairs, Energy and Public Enterprises: “The ICC is a Berlin icon that has been waiting for its next era for many years. Today, we are proving that this unique place has a future: a new, vibrant and innovative district full of opportunities will emerge in the west of our city. Since the building entered preservation mode, we have never been as close as we are today. Over the past five years, spanning two different Berlin state governments, we have worked intensively to reach this point. Now, together, we are achieving a real milestone. We are entering the detailed project preparation and award phase, including negotiations on the long-term ground lease agreements, which will ultimately be submitted to the new Berlin State Parliament for approval. The ICC will once again become a lively destination and a defining landmark at Berlin’s western gateway. It will still take a little more time but it’s going to be something spectacular.”

Christian Gaebler, Senator for Urban Development, Building and Housing: “Built in the 1970s, the ICC has always been an international hub symbolising Berlin as a global city. With a contemporary new use, this role can now be revived. The plans of the Project Partnership Quartier ICC will improve the urban integration of the ICC while also helping to shape Berlin’s overall urban development. I am pleased that the Senate Department for Urban Development, Building and Housing will be responsible for the development planning process as the competent planning authority.”

Birgit Möhring, Managing Director of BIM Berliner Immobilienmanagement GmbH: “The redevelopment of the ICC is an extraordinary undertaking - not only because of its size

and complexity, but also because of its significance for Berlin. The recommendation for award now provides a solid foundation for launching the next phase of project development. The proposed concept demonstrates how heritage preservation, public use and economic viability can be successfully combined. The task now is to create the many technical, legal and financial prerequisites needed to transform this vision into a sustainable future project for the ICC.”

Project Partnership Quartier ICC: “The ICC Berlin is more than a building – it is a promise for the future of the city’s cultural impact. Its revitalisation and the urban transformation of the surrounding district will once again position Berlin as an active force in the international cultural landscape, as well as in science, research, education and hospitality, while sending a visible signal for innovation, exchange and cultural excellence.”

The ICC as an international destination for Arts, Culture, Creative Industries and Innovation

The concept recommended for award aims to transform the ICC into an internationally recognised destination for arts, culture and innovation. The former single-purpose congress centre will be replaced by a diverse and permanently accessible urban district, open to Berlin residents and visitors alike, seven days a week.

Five key areas of use are planned. The Great Hall will become a flexible venue for concerts, events and a wide range of formats. Hall 2 will be transformed into an independent exhibition and experience space, creating a new ICC experience while complementing the event programme. The central foyer and additional areas will accommodate restaurants, bars, studios, galleries and cultural uses. The centrepiece of the concept will be a publicly accessible ground-floor passage running through the building from north to south. Together with a new southern entrance and interior spaces opening towards the surrounding district, the ICC will become an urban boulevard that completes the event activities within the halls.

New developments are planned on the adjacent sites at addresses Messedamm 9 and Messedamm 11, connecting the ICC more closely with its surroundings and creating new urban destinations along the Messedamm. At Messedamm 9, currently used as a car park, a high-rise building with hotel, residential and office uses is planned. The existing parking structure at Messedamm 11 will be replaced by a modern mobility and parking facility with additional hotel, office, retail and restaurant space. Together with attractive public squares, improved pedestrian connections, new entrances and hospitality offerings, a

vibrant district will emerge that generates new cultural and economic momentum throughout the day.

Back to the Future: History and Timeline

The ICC is one of the most significant examples of post-war modernist architecture in Berlin. Since the end of its regular operations in 2014, the building has remained in preservation mode. The ongoing maintenance and safeguarding of the property alone cost the State of Berlin approximately two million Euros annually.

Following an expression of interest procedure in 2018/2019, the Berlin Senate decided in 2023 to launch a procurement process for the revitalisation of the ICC. After a two-year preparation phase involving extensive studies, including a hazardous materials survey, a feasibility study and heritage assessments, the process was launched across Europe in November 2024.

As part of a competitive dialogue procedure, the project partnership developed its concept through an iterative process in collaboration with a distinguished panel of technical experts and stakeholders. Following a positive evaluation by the jury in April 2026 and the subsequent decision of the Steering Committee for the procurement process, the official recommendation for award was issued on 12 June 2026.

The upcoming negotiations on the exclusivity agreement and the subsequent award preparation phase mark the next stage in the revitalisation of the ICC. The goal is to establish all prerequisites for granting the hereditary building rights/ ground lease agreements by 2028. Initial construction works could begin from 2029, with a phased opening of the new district from 2032/2033 onwards.