The prequalified competition
- how are architects appointed to invited competitions?

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Foreword

This paper present research findings from a study on prequalification in architectural competitions. It is an English version of a paper in Swedish that was presented in a conference 2011, *The Gothenburg Public Management Seminar*, 15-16 November. Some of the research findings have also been presented 2011 in a course called *Architecture issues* at the School of Architecture and the Built Environment, KTH, Stockholm, and at the conference on *International Competitions and Architectural Quality in the Planetary Age*, Montreal, 16-17 Mars, 2012.

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Abstract
This paper presents findings from a study of prequalification in architectural competitions in Sweden. The aim was to develop knowledge of how organizers in Sweden select architects/teams to invited competitions. Prequalification is a selection procedure used early in the competition process for identifying suitable candidates for the following design phase. Usually three to six architectural firms/teams are invited to develop design solutions for the competition task. The research question is about how the organizers find these candidates.

There are ten competitions examined in the study. Five municipal competitions and five organised by government clients. The reason for the selection of cases is that the public sector is a major organizer of competitions in Sweden. The methodology of the investigation is a combination of mapping, case studies and document review. Results show that there are 375 applications from architects in the competitions. 43 architect firms/teams (11%) have been invited to competitions. The vast majority of the applications (84%) came from Sweden. This is explained by the fact that organizers require Swedish as the competition language.

All the organizers used a selection process that included two distinct phases. The clients start by checking whether the applications meet the requirements specified in the invitation. This is followed by an evaluative phase with assessment of the architectural offices professional profile, supported by relevant reference projects and personal references. Decisive in the final assessment is the organizer’s evaluation of the candidates’ ability to produce the project with architectural quality, to combine creative solutions with functional demands and to cooperate with developers and contractors. The assessment in the second evaluative phase is performed with the support of three different models: voting among reviewers, scoring merits in applications or by an overall assessment of candidates.

Key words: Prequalification, Architectural competition, Invitation, Procurement, Organizer, Client, Architect firms, Competition teams

1. INTRODUCTION
This paper looks into the prequalification of architectural firms in contemporary architectural competitions in Sweden. Prequalification is a selection process used by the organizing parties for invited competitions. Prequalification begins when the organizer draws up and extends an invitation for the competition. The invitation outlines the competition goals, the evaluation criteria for selecting the competition candidates and the documents, which should be included in the application. Architectural firms express their interest in participating by sending in their applications. A group of persons from the organizing body, a selection committee will then go through the applications and choose appropriate candidates for the competition. Normally three to six firms/teams are pointed out. This is a brief description of how municipal and governmental clients arrange invited architecture competitions.

From the description it is clear that prequalification is the meeting of two parties: the organizer and the interested architectural firm. How that meeting takes form may be studied from either the organizer’s or the architectural firm’s point of view. The different perspectives shed light on each other. In this study I have chosen to examine prequalification from the point of
view of how public organizers appoint architectural firms to invited architecture competitions with a limited number of participants.

There are at least four reasons for examining prequalification. 1) First, there is the lack of knowledge about how firms are chosen to participate in invited competitions. There doesn’t seem to be any research done on the subject in Sweden. Both architects and organizers need to know about prequalification to develop a systematic input of experience in the building sector. 2) Second reason is that the firm/team selected will be the object of future negotiations for architectural services. The first-prize winner can count on future assignments. The Architectural firms not chosen to continue in the competition selection process do not have a chance. However, costs still remain for the applications. That is the fate of 89 % of the candidates in studied competitions. 3) A third important reason for the research is that prequalification is regulated by law in the European Union. Public organizers must advertise the competition and make it available to architectural firms in Europe. The legal structure is based on the idea that competition results in a more efficient use of tax money. But, the result might be too many participants competing for the same assignment. For this reason organizers often prefer a competition with a limited number of participants rather than an open competition with numerous firms/teams. Prequalification allows the organizer to decide which candidates should be invited to the competition. On the Association of Swedish Architects’ home page you can see that a majority of architecture and urban design competitions sponsored by municipal and governmental organizations are invited competitions. The same is true for competitions in Norway, Denmark and Finland (Kazemian, Rönn & Svensson, 2007). 4) A fourth reason for the research is that architecture competitions take place early on in the planning process and are related to projects with long life spans. Buildings are objects, which occupy space and determine how the environment will be experienced in the future. Seen from this point of view prequalification is the very first step in planning processes of strategic importance for Architecture and the Built Environment.

1.1 The research field
Despite the significance of prequalification there are surprisingly few studies that focus on the selection of architects for invited competitions. I have not come across any Swedish studies. On the other hand, prequalification has been studied in Holland and Denmark. In Deciding about Design Quality Leentje Volker (2010) describes how public promoters in Holland contract architectural services. She examines the potential success factors in the negotiations as well as barriers. Volker makes several suggestions for negotiating procurements, which are likely to be better suited to the preconditions of architecture.

There is a strong dissatisfaction among architects on bureaucracy, high costs through and excessive requirements from public promoters/clients compared to the scope of the projects (Kroes, Meijer, & Visscher, 2009). Volker and Lauche (2008) note that the selection of architects for competitions and the judging of competition proposals resemble each other. They have the same structure even if the basic criteria for making the choices differ. The selection of architects is based on personal experience, reputation and references. The quality of the competition proposal, on the other hand, is evaluated from the point of view of design, how the proposal looks in the drawings, descriptions and illustrations. As I interpret the results, prequalification of the candidates for the competition and the jury’s quality assessment of the design proposal in competitions are two different types of architectural critique.

The Danish study of prequalification in architecture competitions was made at the School of Economics in Copenhagen by Kristian Kreiner and Merete Gorm during 2008 and 2009. The study from 2008 describes the perspective and experiences of promoters. That survey was based on questionnaires, which were answered by 98 informers. Of those, 60% were public
promoters/developers and 40% were from the private sector. The Danish study differs in structure from my study on two important points. Kreiner and Gorm seek knowledge about prequalification for competitions using questionnaires directed at promoters. The answers obtained using this survey methodology is based on general opinions and personal experiences. I am looking for knowledge about prequalification by analyzing documents from a strategically chosen group of public organizers. This investigation provides new empirical evidence to the field and unique findings. The second difference concerns promoters/developers. The questionnaire in the Danish study was answered by both public and private clients. I have investigated competitions organized by municipal and governmental organizers. My study only includes public clients, as opposed to private promoters, who must select firms/teams in accordance with the Public Procurement Law. The common point of departure for both studies is that they cover contemporary competitions where architectural firms are chosen by the organizers.

1.2 Research Project
An architectural competition is a field of knowledge that is important for both architects and their promoters and clients. As such the competition process can be divided into seven typical phases, from invitation to implementation.

• Invitation: The first phase is the work of the organizer who sends out the invitations and places the appropriate advertising. The invitation describes the competition’s purpose, economic remuneration, the documents required for applying, criteria used to evaluate the candidates and information about the assessors.

• Application: In the second phase the interested architectural firms draw up and submit the application documents. The required information would include data about the company’s financial status and organization, CV for the key persons, reference projects and contact information for the reference persons at clients for those projects.

• Selection: The third phase is defined by the organizer’s selection of firms/teams for the competition. A typical evaluation has two steps: the first, a formal review of candidates from the “must have” requirements in the invitation, followed by a second soft evaluation based on the reference projects. In the second phase, the application is examined taking into account architectural quality, ability to combine creative solutions with efficient functions and how the cooperation would work with the promoter/developer.

• Competition program: The fourth phase is the organizer’s development of the brief for the competition; description of the competition goals, drawing up the requirements, goals and criteria for judging the design proposals as well as the selection of jury members. At this point members of The Association of Swedish Architects will be appointed if one has not already been so.

• Architectural design process: The fifth phase is the idea production and the design of the competition assignment. The competing firms/teams analyze the competition program, search for a primary generator, formulate the fundamental ideas for the design challenge and visualize the proposals for the design solutions.

• Quality judgment: In the sixth phase the jury tests the quality of the design proposals in the competition, chooses a winner and draws up the jury’s statement. The positive and negative sides of the proposals are analyzed and evaluated. The jury’s task is to identify the overall best solution to the assignment. The architects on the jury are usually asked to present the proposals to the client’s jury members.
• *Implementation*: The seventh and final phase is the implementation of the winning proposal. The competition leads to negotiations of architectural services between the client and the winning firm/team. Already in the invitation it is stated that the winner may count on continuing the assignment if the project is carried through.

1.3 Purpose and research questions
This paper describes the results from a study of how organizers point out architectural firms/teams for invited competitions. The main object was to gain more knowledge about prequalification in architecture competitions. Of primary interest for the research were the first three steps in prequalification: *invitation, application, and selection*.

The study starts with the hypothesis that prequalification is a series of choices: to elect, to reject and to select. The architectural firm that wishes to take part in the competition sends in an application based on an invitation. That is an active yes choice. Firms who do not wish to participate make an active and/or passive no choice. Candidates with incomplete applications are eliminated.

A basic assumption is that the organizer invites knowledgeable, attractive, interesting or exciting candidates to participate in competitions. Either the organizer looks for an appropriate mix of competitive firms/teams or candidates are chosen on the basis of their own professional merits. Since there are many more applications from architectural firms than are able to participate in an invited competition, the organizers are forced to make a selection. I wish to illustrate this crucial point with the help of the following five research questions:

- *How do the competitions highlight their attractiveness?*
- *What competence and information are sought from the requirements in the invitation?*
- *Which criteria steer the evaluation of the candidates?*
- *How is the selection process organized?*
- *What evaluation models are used by clients to choose the firms/teams?*

1.4 Theory and method
I have used a theoretical reference frame that include four research strategies for gathering and processing data:

**Mapping**: The study began by mapping The Association of Swedish Architects’ home page for competitions. There is a list of all competitions that have been approved by the organization and are arranged according to the valid competition rules. The investigation was limited to public competitions during 2007-2009. From the home page of The Swedish Association of Architects I downloaded the competition documents from invited competitions: Competition programs, design proposals in selected competitions (site plan, facades, sections, illustrations and descriptive text) and the jury statement. The documents are freely available through the association’s website (*www.arkitekt.se/tavlingar*). The mapping was used in choosing cases, competitions thought to be informative and exemplify the important traits of prequalification.

**Case studies**: With the help of information at the Swedish Architect’s homepage I have studied ten competitions. Five competitions with municipal clients and five with governmental clients has been the object of the case studies. The cases were first studied separately and thereafter compared with each other (Stake, 1995; Johansson, 2007). By means of comparison, the similarities and differences were identified. The case studies resulted in practical knowledge of prequalification based on experience from contemporary competitions (Janik, 1996). Professional experience is used by designers, architects and town planners to create a *repertoire of cases* (Schön, 1983). The cases are used again in new assignments, as form prin-
principles, action rules and patterns to carry out work tasks. There is a tension between theory and practice that is inherent in “making professions” (Dunin-Woyseth and Michl, 2001). Essential to the functioning of practical theory is the ability to deliver good advice in the face of situations requiring a choice.

**Document review:** To get access to the competition documents the organizers were contacted by mail. I asked for notes from meetings, decision material, protocols and invitations to prequalification. The documents were analyzed by close reading (Milos, 2010). The key words and meaningful sentences were noted and interpreted. The reading of documents was also inspired by Dana Cuff (1999). She used prize-winning architectural projects for identifying factors that promote architectural quality. The interaction between architects and promoters/clients is seen to be essential for the development of quality (Arge & Belike, 2003). The profession regards competitions as an experimental arena and a laboratory for innovative design. New thinking is ascribed to young firms, first-prize winners of competitions, and architectural firms with spearhead reputations. It is the impression of quality that appears in the selection processes studied.

**Architectural critique and judging theory:** The organizing bodies in the study appoint groups of people to point out suitable firms/teams for the competition. The decision is part of a complex selection process with several unknown factors which make the decision-makers strengthen known aspects, highlight earlier experiences of cooperation and reward factors which legitimize the decision (Hemlin, Johanson & Montgomery 1990; Kreiner and Gorm, 2008). The decision is motivated by architectural critique. According to Michael Benedikt (2007) it is possible to evaluate architecture in a fair way. Architectural critique appears in competitions in three different forms. First, self-criticism at the drawing board and critique from colleagues is a design method for architects developing a competition proposal. Second, critique is also a work method for competition juries to identify qualities, weaknesses and ambiguities in proposals. Third, the jury statement is a written critique on the competition at the end of the assessing process (Rönn, 2010). The organizer’s judgment of the references in prequalification may also be seen as a form of critique. Wayne Attoe (1978) differentiates between three categories of architectural critique: normative, interpretive and descriptive. Normative critique is based on criteria, rules or concepts the project is compared with. Interpretive critique is based on how the project is experienced by the assessor. Descriptive critique is based on data. Svensson (2008) found that architectural critique could be used to explain the difference between the way architects and laymen on the jury went about finding a first-prize winner in competitions.

1.5 Selection of cases

The search for informative cases began with a review of The Swedish Association of Architects’ homepage. There were 29 competitions shown for the period 2007-2009, approved by the association and conducted in Sweden.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competition type</th>
<th>Governmental</th>
<th>Municipal</th>
<th>Private</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open competition: 9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invited competition: 20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total: 29</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The public sector has been a very dominating organizer. Table 1 shows that 28 out of 29 competitions have municipal and governmental organizers. There were 20 invited competitions during that period and ten have been chosen for case studies. Five competitions were
organized by governmental clients where designing of buildings in natural and cultural landscapes have been in focus. These five cases are:

- 2009 competition for an exhibition building (visitor’s centre) in a national park (Laponia)
- 2008 competition for an exhibition building (visitor’s centre) at Lake Vänern (Victoria House)
- 2007 competition for an exhibition building (visitor’s centre) at Lake Täkern
- 2007 competition for an exhibition building (visitor’s centre) for nature reserve (Stendörren)
- 2007 competition for a new entrance to national park (Skuleskogen)

The following five municipal competitions were chosen for case studies:

- 2009 competition for Stora Torget (Main Square) in Visby town
- 2009 competition for housing at Västra Kajen, Jönköping town
- 2008 competition for Cultural Centre in Vaxholmn town
- 2007 competition for exhibition building (visitor’s centre) for wetlands in Kristianstad
- 2007 competition for a new Music & Theatre in Jönköping town

Competitions where municipalities are the organizer have a broader repertoire of competition tasks compared to governmental clients. That is because municipalities organize more competitions based on a wider range of local interests/needs.

2. RESULT

The ten competitions included in the study generated 375 applications. 315 out of 375 submissions (84%) are from Swedish architect firms. 60 out of 375 (16%) applications are submitted by foreign firms. 43 architect firms (11%) have been invited to competitions. The remainder (89%) have been eliminated during the selection process. 38 of the 43 invited firms/teams (88%) come from Sweden, three from Denmark and two from Norway. One reason why the competitors are mainly from Nordic firms/teams is the organizer's requirement that the competition language must be Swedish. English language reference projects are accepted, but the competition is carried out in Swedish. The organizer’s rule on language reflects their wish to follow up references and acquire information on how the architects cooperate with clients, developers and contractors.

The EU directive 2004/18/EC prohibits the geographical limitation of architectural competitions organized by public principals. But there are no regulations regarding the language used in the competitions. The requirement for Swedish is for practical reasons. It facilitates communication. But one consequence is that the competition culture takes on a national air. It is not by accident that the winners in the study were all Swedish architect firms/teams:

- Wingårdh Arkitektkontor (4 first prizes, including 3 together with NOD)
- NOD Natur Orienterad Design (3 first prizes together with Wingårdh Arkitektkontor)
- White Arkitekter (2 prizes)
- Andersson Jönsson Landskapsarkitekter (2 first prizes together with Wingårdh Arkitektkontor and Formverkstad Söder)
- Malmström Edström (2 first prizes together with NOD, Tyréns and Sydväst Arkitektur and Landskap)
- Tham & Videgård Hansson Arkitekter (1 first prize)
- Sydväst Arkitektur och Landskap (1 first prize together with Malmström Edström)
- Tyréns (1 first prize together with NOD and Sydväst Arkitektur och Landskap)

The first prize winners are well-known architect firms in Sweden. Wingårdhs Arkitektkontor, NOD, Andersson Jönsson Landskapsarkitekter, Malmström Edström and White Arkitekter have been exceptionally successful compared with their competitors. In the statement (Eva-
luation 2008-09-30), the organizer called one of the firms that won first prize, Tham & Videgård Hansson Arkitekter, a “young, creative firm with great architectural ability”. However, this company had already existed for ten years at the time of the competition. The responsible architect was 40 years old.

To be “young and creative” is a judgment that seems to reflect a general opinion about a company’s profile, reputation or ability to renew itself, rather than measurable criteria such as number of years in the profession, and age of the responsible architect. In architecture youth and innovative design are interconnected. Four out of ten organizers have had “young and creative” mentioned as a reason for their selection of firms/teams. A similar wish for renewal is found in the Danish study. 37 % of promoters replied that they would gladly have a “wild card” in the competition (Kreimer and Gorm, 2008).

2.1 Interest and attractiveness

All competitions in architecture and urban design are not of equal interest. Some are more important than others. Four competitions in the study were more attractive to the firms/teams than the others. The following competitions drew the most applications:

- 2009 competition for housing Västra Kajen in Jönköping town (62 submissions)
- 2009 competition for an exhibition building (visitor’s centre) in Laponia (54 submissions)
- 2008 competition for an exhibition building (visitor’s centre) at Lake Vänern (51 submissions)
- 2007 competition for new Music & Theatre in Jönköping town (42 submissions)

Least interesting were the following three competitions:

- 2007 competition on Entrance to Skuleskogens National Park (9 submissions)
- 2007 competition for an exhibition building (visitor’s centre) at Stendörren (22 submissions)
- 2007 competition for an exhibition building (visitor’s centre) for wetlands in Kristianstad (29 submissions)

An explanation for the differences can be sought in the competition tasks. The competition for new housing in Jönköping, which is a larger building project, has for example more candidates compared with the entrance to Skuleskogens National Park, which is a smaller project. But there are very few cases where the competition task explains the difference in attractiveness. An equally important result is that among the competitions for exhibition buildings (visitor’s centre) there are cases with both strong interest (54 applications) and weak interest (22 submissions). The competition tasks and how challenging they are for the architects seem to be an insufficient explanation. There must be other driving forces behind the differences in the architect firms’ response to the invitation.

2.2 Price level and interest

There are two ways in which the organizer influences the competition with economic compensation. First, the amount of the prize money for the competition as a whole. Second, through compensation to the invited architect firms/teams for their design proposals. The amount of the prize money varies from 300 000 SEK to 1 million SEK. The organizer’s compensation to the competitors also differs, from at least 100 000 SEK per firm/team to a max-

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1 Denmark and Norway have a wild card system. In Denmark all architectural firms that meet the following four requirements can be on the Wild Card List: 1) Company must be registered for VAT, 2) At least one of the owners/partners has to architect according to the EU Directive for the education at school of architecture, 3) The firm shall have a maximum turnover of 2 million DK in annual average during five years, 4) The firm has maximum of five years of accounting. The four criteria are measurable and have been discussed with stakeholders in the construction industry. The purpose with the wild card list in Denmark is to support young architects and newly established architectural firms. ([www.dac.dk/db/filarkiv/9482/faktaark_HIGH.pdf](http://www.dac.dk/db/filarkiv/9482/faktaark_HIGH.pdf))
mum of 200 000 SEK. Let me start with the “low-prize” cases. Three architecture competitions had lower prize remunerations than the others:

- 2009 competition for Stora Torget in Visby town (prize 300 000 SEK)
- 2008 competition for Cultural Centre in Vaxholm town (prize 375 000 SEK)
- 2007 competition for the New Entrance to Skuleskogens National Park (prize 400 000 SEK)

These “low-prize” competitions have an award sum of 300 000 SEK – 400 000 SEK. Compensation to the architect firm/team is about 100 000 SEK – 125 000 SEK. Altogether 80 architect firms wished to participate in these three competitions. In spite of the prize sum being low, the competition for Stora Torget in Visby drew 39 applications. The competition for the Cultural Centre in Vaxholm, with a prize of 375 000 SEK, drew 33 applications. In the third competition, Entrance to Skuleskogens National Park, there were only nine applications. Surprisingly few architect firms showed an interest in this competition. If, on the other hand, we consider the most highly remunerated competitions, the three following cases stand out:

- 2007 competition for a new Music & Theatre in Jönköping town (prize 1 000 000 SEK)
- 2009 competition for an exhibition building (visitor’s centre) in Laponia (prize 900 000 SEK)
- 2009 competition for Housing at Västra Kajen, Jönköping town (prize 750 000 SEK)

“High-cost competitions” have a prize amount of between 750 000 SEK – 1 000 000 SEK. Remuneration to the architect firms/teams varies from 150 000 SEK to 200 000 SEK for their development of design proposals. The higher remuneration level, compared with the low level, together generated 158 applications, which are twice as many applications. That means that the prize amount and the remuneration to the competition teams are what generate applicants and give status to the competitions. The study shows that the economic conditions have a significant influence on the attractiveness of the invited competitions.

### 2.3 Submission requirements and design criteria

The submission requirements and the design criteria for assessing the applicants in the invitation reveal the kind of information that will be used to select firms/teams. There are a number of “must haves” and design criteria for evaluating candidates, which appear repeatedly in prequalification invitations. They are:

- **Curriculum Vitae:** CV for responsible architects in the design team, their education and professional qualifications for the competition assignment.
- **Reference project:** 3-5 reference projects relevant to the competition assignment. Usually 2 out of 3 projects should have been implemented.
- **Client references:** contact information for reference persons of the clients in the projects mentioned (promoters, contractors).
- **Project organization:** a plan showing how the assignment should be carried out on the site and how the necessary knowledge/professions should be coordinated for the project.
- **Quality system and environmental policy:** Statement of the firm’s internal system for quality assurance and environmental policy.
- **Finances and taxes:** Documentation of company’s economic situation and paid taxes. The information must not be more than 2 months old
- **Affidavit:** an affidavit signed by the legal representative that the company has not filed for bankruptcy, is not under court administration or committed any grievous error in the practice of the profession.
- **Contact information for the applicant:** company’s registration number and name, telephone number, e-mail of the contact person.
Finally the application should be signed by the firm’s accredited persons and submitted on time. There are several needs for information that the organizers want to satisfy. The document is an expression of administrative security, economic security and professional competence. CVs for the key persons provide information about their education, experience and ability to deliver the required solutions for the competition task. The project organization shows how the work will be coordinated and the architects available for the client.

A candidate’s capacity for developing architectonic quality and ability to cooperate in a project can be investigated in two ways: first, through the reference persons at the promoters and contractors. Second, the reference project which should be relevant to the competition task. The candidate’s creative ability is communicated via images of the project (photos, drawings, descriptions and illustrations). The reference project will be the object of architectural critique in the evaluation. Study visits at architect firms can be used if there is a need for additional information about these representations of projects.

Reference persons give the organizer the possibility to be informed about how the promoters and contractors have experienced cooperation with architects during the reference project. The persons named are contacted during the final evaluation. Notes from these conversations are saved in the archives of public organizers. The Danish study gives a somewhat different picture of the organizer’s search for information in the prequalification. According to Kreiner and Gorm (2008) the promoters base their choice of architects on their own experience of previous cooperation with architect firms and their personal network. Concrete experience from other clients of promoters is seldom used in Denmark for the systematic evaluation of a candidate’s suitability.

**Design criteria**

The final choice of architect firm/team for the invited competition takes place in a selection process at a later stage. The criteria for that evaluation are described in the invitation. The candidates’ suitability is determined according to the following four criteria:

- **Architectural quality**: How has the architect applied the concept of “good architecture” in the reference project?
- **Creative ability**: How has the architect developed innovative solutions to the architectural and functional problems of the reference project?
- **Collaboration**: How has the architect cooperated with the client, the promoter and the contractor on the reference project?
- **Competence and resources**: Does the competition team have the professional competence and the resources required for the assignment?

These four design criteria reappear in all selection processes. In some cases the organizer completed the appraisal with criteria about how the architect solved environmental aspects and handled accessibility in the reference project. The criteria had two steps: **what** and **how**. The first step pointed out values the organizers felt were especially worthwhile, which in this case are: Good architecture, creativity, ability to collaborate, as well as competence and resources. The first step describes **what** is important in the appraisal. Then comes the second step in the evaluation, which is a question. The second step is about **how** the organizer should go about the evaluation. The organizers learn about the architects’ qualifications by questioning their references. This dialogue-based evaluation is decisive for selecting which architect firms/teams will be invited to participate in the competition.
2.4 Selection process
Municipal and governmental organizers begin the selection process in the same way. It begins by checking if the candidates have fulfilled the requirements. Most companies have good order in their finances, administration and references and proceed to the next phase. But in two cases there were an early elimination of 31 architect firms/teams. The result indicates that there are two different types of organizers and selection committees: A “liberal” organizer with a generous evaluation of applications and a “strict” organizer with a hard control of the “must-haves” in the first step of selection.

The “liberal organizers” eliminate candidates at a later stage in the selection process compared to the “strict organizers”. The majority of the public organizers and their selection committees in this study prefer to postpone the eliminations in order to benefit from the architectural critique judgment of the firm’s references. The Danish study also revealed differences in how promoters judge the merits of architectural firms in prequalification (Kreiner and Gorm, 2008). Firms with limited commission experience were more critical towards candidates than experienced clients and promoters. The survey showed a connection between the way applications from architect firms are reviewed during prequalification, client’s experience in negotiations of architectural services and their desire to find competent candidates for the competition task.

Strict organizers
In this study the County Council of Jönköping is a “strict organizer” with tough controls of the requirements set forth in the invitation. In the architectural competition for a new building for Music & Theatre in Jönköping town 19 out of 42 (45 %) applications were eliminated in the formal review in the first phase of the selection process. One application came in late. The remaining was eliminated for two reasons by the selection committee. Ten applications were missing the information about the financial status of the company. They were mainly foreign firms from England, Holland, Denmark, Norway and Finland. The other reason was that the reference projects were deemed to be “irrelevant”. This judgment affected 12 architect firms in this case.

Vaxholm town is the other organizer with a strict control of applications. In the competition for a new cultural centre 12 out of 33 (35%) applications were rejected at the beginning of the selection process. The reasons are similar to those in Jönköping. Six of the 12 applications were eliminated by the selecting committee on the basis of administrative and economic reasons. These were firms that had not sent in their environmental policy and system for quality assurance, submitted outdated registration certificates or had too weak economies (risk class 2). Six applications were missing the required information about reference projects. Either it wasn’t possible to deduce the reference persons or the architect firm cited more than one project that hadn’t been carried out.

Liberal organizer
An example of two “liberal organizers” where only a few applications were eliminated in the initial control is Gotland municipality and the County Administration Board of Norrbotten. Gotland municipality only eliminated one out of 8 applications (3%) in the prequalification for the competition Stora Torget in Visby. The application was submitted too late. In the competition for an exhibition building (visitor’s centre) in Laponia four out of 54 applications (7 %) were eliminated in the first phase of selection process. All four applications had arrived too late. The other 50 architect firms had sent in their applications on time and thus fulfilled the requirements according to the governmental organizer and their selecting committee.
2.5 Evaluation group and reviewer

All ten organizers in the study had appointed special selection committees to review the candidates. The committees were made up of between three and six persons. Some of the reviewers at the organizers followed the competition process and later returned as representatives for the organizer on the jury. In this way, knowledge from the prequalification became available to the jury members for their assessing of the design proposals.

The Association of Swedish Architects participated in the organizers’ selection committees both as advisors and decision makers. In these cases, representatives of The Association of Swedish Architects participated in the selecting of competitors in accordance with the decision-making documents. Since the organization markets its advisory role in competitions on their home page, take part in the jury with two judges and approve competition program, it is not surprising that organizers turn to The Association of Swedish Architects and ask for advice about prequalification.

Suggesting selection principles, informing about criteria for evaluation and describing the profiles of architect firms can be regarded as “consumer advice” from The Association of Swedish Architects. It is a means of satisfying the organizer’s need for information, particularly for inexperienced clients and promoters. But participating in the decisions is not problem-free. It may be regarded as going against the principle that all members be treated equally and be offered similar conditions.

I have not come across any extensive criticism concerning the participation of The Association of Swedish Architects as a decision maker in selection committees. Perhaps the members look upon this participation as a guarantee that firms/teams be invited fairly to partake in the competitions. The Association’s participation may be seen as a counter weight to the organizer’s tendency to choose “a sure thing”, well-known architect firms they are familiar with and who can show implemented projects relevant to the competition task. According to the Competition Committee, The Association usually encourages organizers to “invite an untried firm to compete with the more established ones” (The Association of Swedish Architects 2010, p 9). Kreiner and Gorm (2008) look upon the “wild card” procedure in Denmark as a possibility for young firms to balance the conservative tendency of prequalification.

2.6 Selection and judging strategy

There are both similarities and differences in prequalification. One similarity in the organizers’ search for appropriate candidates is a two-stage selection process with an initial check of “hard” requirements followed by a “soft” assessment where references play a key role. Another similarity is that the selection of candidates entails architectural critique. The difference lies in how professional competence is defined, evaluated, legitimized and included in the competition. Three model types are the roots of the differences in the selection process used by municipal and governmental organizers in their final judgment of candidates in invited competitions. The model appears in mixed forms, but is simplified for the sake of clarity. The models may be called voting model, scoring model, and judging model.

Voting model: The prequalification of candidates for the 2008 competition for an exhibition building (visitor’s centre) at Lake Vänern (Victoria House) is an excellent example of the voting model. Characteristic for this model is that the selection of candidates takes place successively through a series of votes. The decision principle is based on comparison and personal approval. To continue in the voting process active support is needed. Only the candidates that are approved by the review group remain in the competition and are therefore considered better than their competitors by the selection committee.
According to the invitation to the prequalification five or six architect firms would be chosen for the competition. Applications were to contain at most three reference projects. It should be “clearly stated that the project was realized in the same manner as presented” (Invitation 2007-12-20). The competition language was Swedish. However, the application could be submitted in Danish, Norwegian or English.

The organizer stated in the invitation that candidates who fulfilled the requirements would proceed to a qualitative review. Here, each “remaining application was weighed against the others to determine which one best corresponds to and fulfils the evaluation criteria” (Invitation 2007-12-20). The determining criteria were:

• Architectonic design capabilities as described in the reference object
• Ability to create a building in dialog with the surrounding natural and cultural environment
• Ability to effectively combine area-efficient solutions with good function and form
• Experience from similar projects

The invitation resulted in 51 applications. The selection committee needed three meetings and voted five times to choose five architect firms for the competition.

Meeting 2008-02-05. Three persons attended the first meeting. After examining all 51 candidates the committee decided to divide the applications into four categories.

• Group 1: Very strong applications (2 firms/teams)
• Group 2: Strong applications (10 firms/teams)
• Group 3: Somewhat weaker applications (15 firms/teams)
• Group 4: Applications, which were not competitive enough (24 firms/teams)

The first vote reduced the number of candidates from 51 to 27. The applications in group 4 were eliminated.

Meeting 2008-02-15. After voting twice, the number of candidates was reduced to 14. The selection committee began by examining if there was any reason to reconsider the results from the first meeting. This was not the case. Thereafter, the applications in Group 3 were examined. Six of those were kept. In the following vote the number of competing candidates was reduced from 20 to 14.

Meeting 2008-02-18. Once again the selection committee began by reviewing the candidates that had been eliminated. After two more voting sessions five architect firms remained in the competition. The first vote had reduced the number from 14 to 10. In the second vote, five more candidates were rejected after their merits had been re-examined. The remaining five firms were invited to the competition: Hidemark & Stintzing Arkitekter, Johan Celsing Arkitektkontor, White Arkitekter, Wikerståhl Arkitektkontor and Wingårdh Arkitektkontor.

The selection committee closed the meeting by assuring themselves that the five chosen architect firms met the requirements. Further, they examined whether or not there were any “border line cases” among the applications that were eliminated. This was not the case. Architectural critique of the reference projects was used to motivate the group’s choice of architect firms for the competition.

**Scoring model:** The 2009 competition for Stora Torget (Main Square) in Visby town illustrates the scoring model. This model is based on the quantification of quality. The design criteria for evaluating professional merits in the invitation are transposed to a point scale. The
candidates with the highest points are the suitable firms/team. The principle behind this model is that the organizer can calculate which firm/team should be invited to the competition by mathematically means. The model has a very alluring appearance of impartiality making it easy for the organizer to justify the choice of candidates.

The invitation states that the organizer intends to invite three architect firms/teams. Considerable importance is placed on the firm’s accessibility in Visby. The application should be submitted in Swedish, the language of the competition. References may be submitted in other languages such as English and Danish. The applications should include five relevant reference projects along with the appropriate reference persons. At least two of the reference projects should have been implemented. According to the invitation, the following three criteria will be used to evaluate the candidates:

• Architectonic design capacity
• Competence
• Experience and resources

Applications were submitted by 39 architect firms/teams. One candidate applied too late and was rejected. The other candidates were scored as their professional profiles were being analyzed. The applications were sorted into three categories by the selection committee:

• Well-known firms with significant architectonic capacity and long experience from carefully designed town spaces
• Well-known firms with extensive experience in developing historical environments
• Young firms with good references and a high architectonic level of modern expression

The candidates’ scoring was based on the criteria: architectonic design capacity, competence, experience and resources. The scale was from 0–5: 0 = Information missing, 1 = inferior, 2 = acceptable, 3 = good, 4 = very good and 5 = exceptionally good. Totally the candidates could obtain 15 points.

The scoring resulted in 26 architect firms/teams being eliminated. Those candidates with at least 12 points remained in the competition. The reviewers in the committee now contacted the promoters and contractors to find out how the remaining candidates cooperated during the reference projects. A close group of four firms/teams with 13-14 points appeared. Through scoring and categorizing the organizer obtained a suitable mix of candidates: well-known architects with good experience complemented by young firms representing new thinking. In this case architectural critique was used to motivate the choice of candidates.

One Danish and two Swedish architect firms/teams fared best in the scoring and the review of their professional merits. SWECO Landskapsarkitektur was invited from the category of well-known firms with significant architectonic capacities and long experience in designing town spaces. Exners Tegnestue AS & Schönherr Landskap was considered to have a good reputation for developing historical environments. Sydväst Arkitektur and Landskap & Malmström Edström were chosen in the category of young firms with good references and high architectonic levels of modern expression. In the final judgment, the decisive factor was the candidates’ composition as a design team and the ability to meet the interdisciplinary character of the competition tasks and the location’s cultural historical significance.

**Judging model:** The 2007 architectural competition for the exhibition building (visitor’s centre) for wetlands in Kristianstad represents a third way for organizers to select candidates for a competition. The model is based on the organizers making an overall judgment. The thought
behind this is that it is possible for a selection committee to find a desirable firm/team for the competition by weighing different aspects into a comprehensive whole.

According to the invitation, the organizer should invite four architect teams to the competition, which were competent in architecture, landscape architecture, structures for wetlands, and visitor centre’s. The candidates had to verify their multidisciplinary competence with 3-5 reference projects. In addition at most 3 assignments in wetland structures and CVs for the key persons on the design team should be included the application. The architect teams that fulfilled the requirements would be judged according to the following criteria:

• How the applicant handled the concept of “good architecture” and proved their ability to find creative solutions to the architectonic and functional problems of public buildings, exhibition architecture and natural landscapes
• How the applicant in the reference project handled wetland structures
• How the applicant in the reference project cooperated with the client and contractors
• How the applicant in the reference project solved the environmental aspects

The invitation resulted in applications from 29 architect teams. Before the review the candidates were divided into the three following categories by the selection committee:

• Very interesting/very experienced
• Interesting experience
• Less interesting, less experienced

The town-planning architect in Kristianstad judged the candidates’ merits before the final evaluation. A colour-key was used to rate how interesting/experienced the teams were for the organizer. From this classification four teams were chosen by the reviewers for their professional competence in architecture, landscape architecture, wetland structures and exhibition experience. The invited architect firms were Arkitektstudio Widjedal Racki Bergerhoff, Formverkstaden Söder Arkitekter och Konstnärer, Uulas Arkitekter and White Arkitekter. These firms received top marks for at least three out of four of the evaluation criteria. The selection committee did not formulate any special motivation for their decision but referred to a collective and overall judgment, a weighing of the qualifications that were seemed interesting for the competition task. This is the public side of the selection process, which is presented to the candidates, the results of prequalification.

3. DISCUSSION
Municipal and governmental organizers can use two fundamental principles to steer the competition process: ex-ante and ex-post. Ex-ante means that the organizer tries to steer the competition process “ahead of time” through the competition tasks, the competition conditions and the selection of participating firms/teams. The prerequisite is that the competition is attractive and draws many qualified candidates. Then it is up to the organizer to identify the design team most suitable for the competition task. This is steering through prequalification and must be done before architects develop good design solutions.

Ex-post means the competition process is steered “afterwards” through architectural design, conducted by invited firms/teams, and the jury’s judgment of the design proposals in competitions. Quality in architecture and municipal building appear as good solutions to the design challenge in the competitions brief. The jury’s job is to identify the best whole solution. That can only be done after the jury has received all the design proposals.
The organizer steers the competition using a combination of ex-ante and ex-post. I am trying to understand how steering “beforehand” works. That is why I am interested in prequalification. The purpose has been to investigate how municipal and governmental organizers choose firms/teams for their competitions.

### 3.1 Attractiveness

The first research question is about the competitions’ power of attraction. This is most evident in the number of applications that are submitted by architect firms. The ten competitions resulted in a total of 375 applications. Among them were many well-known architect firms. Prequalification appears as part of a professional praxis in this context; it is a way for established firms who have been able to manage a portfolio of implemented projects to compete for an assignment. This is an explanation to the attraction based on how architects sell their service in the building sector.

A second factor is money. The attractiveness of a competition is related to the prize sum and the economic remuneration for the competing firms/teams. The number of applications varies from 9 to 62 per competition. The competitions in the study with the highest prize sum and largest remuneration for the firm/team generated more applications than the “low prize competitions”. The economic conditions are more important than the assignment itself and how this challenge is described in the invitation by the organizer.

Both municipal and governmental organizers have organized “high” as well as “low-cost” competitions. They also specify the financial conditions in the invitation before the task has been clarified in the competition program. Interested architect firms only have a summary description of the task to base their application on. An important duty for The Association of Swedish Architects and the jury, who approve the competition brief, will be to gradually adapt the application requirements to the financial conditions the organizer stated in the invitation. This is to ensure architects receive acceptable compensation for their work input. The approval of the organization serves as a guarantee for reasonable conditions and a minimum of “free design work” in the competition.

A third factor that influence the attractiveness is if a winner is guaranteed future assignments. A larger building project from this point of view is more interesting than a lesser design assignment. The invitation holds a general promise of a project/planning assignment for the winning firm/team. That promise is formulated so that the organizer, after the completed competition and in accordance with the jury’s decision, without any prior advertising, has the intention to negotiate the terms of continued cooperation with the first-prize winner. However, it is very difficult to get a clear picture from the invitation about the extent of the work involved for the winner of the competition. On the other hand, an interested firm/team that wins a competition can count on the project assignment. That is, if the competition is not called off; this is surprisingly often the case in Sweden. In this study, three out of ten winning proposals have not been implemented.

A fourth factor, which can explain the attractiveness of a competition from a European perspective, is the organizer’s language requirements. This demand both limits the number of application and makes competitions of special interests for national firms and foreign archi-

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2 During the period 1999-2000, 199 architectural competitions in the Nordic countries were especially reviewed with regard to their implementation. 83-86 % of the competitions were carried out in Denmark, Norway and Finland. Only 71 % of the competitions were completed in Sweden during the same period (Kazemian, Rönn & Svensson, 2007).
tects that can make a joint venture with Swedish design teams. All of the organizers in the study have required Swedish as the competition language. This explains why the majority (84%) of the applicants were from Swedish firms/teams. 38 out of the 43 firms (88%) invited to participate in the competition were Swedish. The other competitors were from three Danish firms and two Norwegian firms. The organizer’s requirement for Swedish as the competition language gives the competition culture in Sweden a national stamp with a Nordic touch.

3.2 Information in the invitation
The second research question focuses on the competence and information sought by the organizer in the invitation. Beyond the requirement for information – which the architect firm should deliver via the documents in the application – lies a standardization tradition, which probably comes from the legal regulations for negotiating architectural services. The Association of Swedish Architects and the Swedish Federation of Consulting Engineers and Architects publish advice and guidelines for negotiating architectural services for potential clients. A possible explanation for why the requirements for information are so similar for municipal and governmental organizers of architectural competitions may lie in the judicial aspects.

The prequalification invitation outlines the various types of information the competition organizer requires. One type of requirement reflects beliefs that written affidavits are a source of knowledge. This requirement is thought to limit the risk of receiving applications from firms lacking the prerequisites for the assignment. The financial requirements favors established firms with good economies free from payment defaults. That may seem reasonable for security but it may be difficult for newly established firms to meet required financial measures, which are too high and could limit renewal in competitions.

Another type of requirement for the competition is the evaluation of the competition design team and their professional skills. The CVs for the key persons contain information about the candidates' knowledge for the task. The description of the project organization in the application gives the organizer a future-oriented picture of how the competition tasks will be carried out on the site. The team’s composition is a major aspect to be considered when the organizer judges the candidates’ suitability for the assignment. Surprisingly often, the competition task is of an interdisciplinary nature. In their invitations, eight out of ten organizers request that teams cover several professional fields. A common pattern in competitions for exhibitions buildings (visitor’s centre) is that the organizers show preference to project organizations, which combine knowledge in architecture and landscape architecture with experience of exhibitions. When evaluating the candidates for the Stora Torget competition in Visby town the reviewers highlighted the team whose key person was a landscape architect cooperating with a traffic planer, heritage building experts and a lighting consultant.

A third type of requirement is the reference project. Here it is representations of projects (photos, illustrations, drawings and descriptions) that form the basis for the decision and which the evaluation group must interpret to get an idea about the firms’ design capabilities. Reference projects generate architectural critique judgments during the selection process. The requirement for reference projects, which should be both implemented and relevant to the competition assignment, makes it impossible for newly established firms to proceed in prequalification. This is the case even if the organizer admits that all the reference projects do not have to be built. At the same time, several organizers pronounce their support for “young architect firms” in the selection. It has happened twice that firms/teams considered as young won first prize. But in spite of the rhetoric, it is architect firms that have been established for several years and have a portfolio of implemented projects that are invited to the competitions. The Norwegian and Danish “Wild card” system is for newly started firms that have not yet become established.
A fourth type of requirement leads to *verbal information*. Applications must include information about reference clients for the reference projects. The organizer wants to be able to get an idea about the architect firm through direct contact with promoters and entrepreneurs. It is mainly in the final judging of candidates that organizers have contacted the reference persons for information about the architect’s ability to cooperate. The answers from the reference persons are a mix of personal experiences and general judgments about architects in the building sector. Volker and Lauche (2008) also noted in a study that in two invited competitions in Holland the promoter’s selection of firm was based on the architect firm’s reputation, particularly that of the project leader. According to Kreiner and Gorm (2008) Danish promoters follow their own experiences and personal network in their selection of architect firms for invited competitions. On this point my study gives a rather different picture of how organizers obtain information about the candidates. The invitation’s requirement for references is a basis for systematic feedback about experience in prequalification. The difference may be due to the fact that I study competitions that are run by municipal and governmental clients. The Danish study includes both private and public promoters with varying degrees of experience as clients for architectural services.

3.3 Design criteria

The third research question looks into the design criteria public organizers use when evaluating a candidate. The design criteria are used when assessing the professional profiles of the architect firms given as references in the applications. The criteria focus on architectonic quality, the creativity of the candidate, competence and resources for the competition task. Just as important to the organizer is the ability to cooperate on a project. Municipal and governmental organizers look for teams, which can combine their wish for quality, creativity and professional competence with financial security and sensitivity towards the demands of the client.

The design criteria are of an open nature. Their multifaceted and searching functions are typical properties in design, architecture and urban design. This can be explained by the fact that these criteria are part of a dialogue-based assessment of design, which communicates questions about the suitability of the candidates. This is the same type of criteria used later on when the jury evaluates the design proposals. Prequalification gives the organizer’s examiners knowledge of the candidates’ design qualifications by addressing questions about the project. The design seems to reply. The reference project extracts information by comparisons and interpretations. For architects it’s a kind of two-way communication. I consider this dialog to be a form of architectural critique. References to a first prize in other competitions and recognition from the trade are acknowledged as signs of quality.

In three municipal competitions the selection process was completed *afterwards* using criteria, which are the basis for categorizing candidates from their professional profiles. Categorization may be seen as a search for a productive difference between candidates to give a more interesting mix of competing firms/teams. Taking the best candidate from each category in the competition allows the organizer access to a mix of design teams with different profiles and qualifications. The possibilities for innovation are combined with professional experience and spearhead competence from well-known firms. This way of defining quality and appointing architect firms is only found in municipal competitions. One possible explanation is their greater experience in negotiating architectural services and thus more knowledge about the consultant field.

3.4 Organization of selection process
The fourth research question is aimed at knowledge about how public organizers arrange their selection process. The five governmental-run competitions were all organized in cooperation with the municipalities and local participants. The organizing body has several parties. Competitions serve here as a means for coordinating national, regional and local interests. Two of the municipal competitions also involve coordinating regional and local parties. The other three municipal competitions in the study reflect internal cooperation between administrations such as town building office, property office, or technical office. Thus there is a very complex organizational structure in the majority of competitions with several built-in interests. This fact may explain the multidisciplinary challenge in competitions.

The organizers have a collective decision-making procedure. There is a selection committee of three to six experts who review the applications. In municipal competitions architects from the town building office are included. The committees normally include representatives from the interested parties participating in the organizing body. The collective decision-making procedure of the selection contributes to the increased similarity in the assessment of the candidates’ merits. Some members from these selection committees follow the competition process as the organizer’s representatives on the jury. In this way experience from the prequalification is carried over to the jury.

There was an extensive cooperation between the organizers and The Swedish Association of Architects in the competitions studied. According to the rules the competition program should be approved by the organization. The Swedish Association of Architects has the right to appoint two members of the jury. The rules stipulate that at least one third of the jury members should have the same qualifications as the competitors. The organizer purchases the services of the jury secretary or the competition administrator from The Association. In three cases The Association of Swedish Architects also participated in the organizer’s selection committee and actively participated in the final selection of firms/teams for the competition. This cooperation reflects the central role architectural competitions play in the profession. Since the competition program, design proposals and jury statement are freely available on The Swedish Association of Architects’ home page, the competitions become part of the collective learning process for the profession. The competition produces exemplary solutions for solving design problems.

All organizers have arranged the selection process in two main phases: an initial formal control of the applications for the requirements followed by a second value assessment of the candidates based on criteria. The control of how requirements are fulfilled shows that there are “strict organizers” who eliminate many applications at the beginning of the selection process. It is not only the design criteria that are ambiguous. The requirements also allow a certain amount of interpretation. “Liberal organizers” only reject applications that have been sent in too late or are missing the required documents. As a result many more applications continue in the judging process. The decision about which architect firms/teams are to be eliminated is made later on in the selection process by liberal organizers and their selection committees than by strict organizers. More organizers prefer to wait with eliminating candidates until the value assessment part of the prequalification.

Kreiner and Gorm (2008) examined the differences in the way inexperienced and professional promoters looked upon the merits of architect firms. One-time promoters/clients with only a few years’ experience were more critical in their judgment of architect firms than experienced promoters. According to Kreiner and Gorm, this result can be interpreted in two different ways. On the one hand, professional promoters are more attractive and therefore draw a greater number of competent architects than one-time clients. This criticism corresponds to the differences in the professional profiles of the architect firms. On the other hand, inexperi-
enced promoters/clients may have a greater need for knowledge. One-time promoters are more anxious to compensate for their lack of experience by acquiring external competence. Therefore the difficulty in the selection procedure is to find enough architect firms with the qualifications to fulfill the competition task, which, in this case, is the basis for the criticism. I would like to deepen the discussion by pointing out a few more possible explanations for the differences in the organizer’s way of reviewing the applications for prequalification.

• The first explanation can be found in the ambiguousness of the requirements. The only requirement that can be answered with a clear “yes” or “no” is that the application be sent in on time with the required documents. The requirement for a “relevant reference project” on the other hand, is something that must be seen in relation to the competition task. The selection committee making a qualitative judgment about the extent to which the requirements are fulfilled appears to be stricter when judging applications.

• A second explanation is that inexperienced reviewers of architecture place more importance on formal shortcomings in the application documents, which make them appear as stricter reviewers. Experienced persons in selection committees trust their professional judgment to a greater extent, focusing more on the content of the application. That explanation is in keeping with how Kreiner and Gorm (2008) interpret the result in the Danish study.

• A third explanation can be found in the consequences of the selection process which are difficult to foresee/grasp. The organizer’s selection committee can be seen as more liberal towards architect firms they know or have worked with on projects. It is a decision-making principle that can explain why so many foreign firms are eliminated in the initial control made by strict organizers. Ambiguities in their applications appear to be more risky compared with known architect firms (Hemlin et al, 1990; Kreiner and Gorm, 2008).

• A fourth explanation can be found in the organizers’ desire to minimize the risk for difficulties in negotiations for architectural services. For this reason it is the “sure” candidates who can guarantee fulfilling the requirements who go on in the evaluation. The explanation stems from organizers with selection committees who wish to protect themselves against any mistakes in the procurement that may be appealed, and are stricter in reviewing the applications. As a consequence of the 2002 revision of the LOU (Swedish Public Procurement Act) it has become easier for bidders to stop procurement when there are serious shortcomings in the background material and receive compensation from the client. The number of complaints has increased dramatically as a consequence of the change in LOU (Lennerfors, 2010).

3.5 Evaluation models
The fifth and last questions concerns models for evaluating candidates in competitions. Three fundamental models are used for prequalification. These models are used in the final judging of submissions and can be summarized as voting, scoring and judging. The organizer’s assessor uses the models to identify significant differences in the quality of the submissions, motivate the selection of firm/team and legitimize the decision. Without differences the selection committees cannot formulate plausible arguments as to why it is better to invite some firms/teams to competitions rather than their competitors.

The use of fundamental models can be explained by the organizers need for systematic when choosing candidates for a competition. Models reflect a professional praxis, a methodology based on experience to highlight qualities in applications and evaluate architect firms. The legal aspects of prequalification have probably strengthened the desire for professional evidence in the selection process for municipal and governmental clients.
The first step in the organizers selection process is to examine the applications for the requirements. All organizers in the study start this way. It is in the second evaluation phase of prequalification that the models become methods for evaluating and ranking candidates. Research in the area is noticeably slanted. Since the scoring model is used for negotiating services and contractors it has been the object of research in economy and law. Prequalification in invited competitions has not been as carefully looked into. The literature contains extensive criticism of the point system used for evaluating qualified services requiring a great deal of knowledge (Jones, 1994; Andersson and Lunander, 2004; Sporring, Bröchner & Kadefors, 2005; Molander, 2009). The results of these services cannot be measured in advance in the same way as well-defined products. The quality of the service is evident in the commission. Transforming quality to quantity gives an oversimplified view of fairness, objectivity and impartiality when judging architect services.

The definitions of the models the organizers use rely on typical traits. The common aim is to simplify the identification of a group of architect firms/teams suited to the competition assignment. An evaluation constraint is in-built in prequalification. Several candidates must be seen as better than others. Not everyone can be invited to participate in the competition. Characteristic for the voting model is that the selection of candidates takes place through a series of votes. The favourites proceed to the next phase. Remaining at the end will be the candidates the selection committee thinks most of and therefore judge to be more suitable than others for the competition. The voting model is an assessing procedure in architecture, which is firmly established in architectural education and professional practice. Judging is based on evaluation and comparison. Design work sample examinations used in Sweden for admittance to architectural schools as well as evaluations of submissions for international architectural competitions are decided by jury voting (Rönn, 2010). The scoring model has a point system, which presumes that the candidate’s merits, as described in their application, can be graded according to a scale previously decided upon. Then the points are added up. The result is a mathematically based ranking. The candidates who get the most points are invited to the competition. In the judging model the organizer’s evaluation is made considering a steering entity in the background. By weighing together qualities using architectural critique the organizers arrive at a decision about which firms/teams are most suited to take part in the competition. The final choice of candidates is made aiming at the idea of a superior wholeness. The evaluation is presented to the competition candidates. How the organizers judged their merits will remain an internal secret.

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Region Gotland
2009 competition for Stora Torget in Visby town

WätterHem (public company) and Riksbyggen (private company)
2009 competition for housing at Västra Kajen, Jönköping town

National Property Board Sweden
2008 competition for an exhibition building (visitor’s centre) at Lake Vänern (Victoria House)

Vaxholm town
2008 competition for Cultural Centre in Vaxholm town

County Administrative Board of Östergötland
2007 competition for an exhibition building (visitor’s centre) at Lake Tåkern

County Administrative Board of Västernorrland
2007 competition for a new entrance to national park (Skuleskogen)

County of Jönköping
2007 competition for a new Music & Theatre in Jönköping town

County Administrative Board of Sörmland
2007 competition for an exhibition building (visitor’s centre) for nature reserve (Stendörren)

Kristianstad municipality
2007 competition for exhibition building (visitor’s centre) for wetlands in Kristianstad