

Competition Brief

The Memorial to Pilots and Members of the RAF in the Mladá Boleslav Region is an artistic project that will dignifiedly commemorate the members of the Royal Air Force from the Mladá Boleslav area – both pilots and ground personnel.

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Applications
|17|10|2025|

Competition Brief

The aim of the competition is to create a memorial which, with high artistic quality and a contemporary visual language, will commemorate the members of the Royal Air Force from the Mladá Boleslav region—pilots, their families, and ground personnel—whose destinies are bound up with the struggle for freedom. The memorial is to be not only a bearer of historical memory, but also a compelling contemporary work in the public realm, capable of engaging the public visually, emotionally, and intellectually. The competition is intended to bring a plurality of perspectives on how the theme of collective memory can be artistically mediated today, and how commemorative meaning can be translated into a site within the civilian urban landscape.

The memorial will be situated in an open setting, in direct contact with the surrounding greenery and in the vicinity of the “Metoděj Vlach Airplane” wayfinding landmark/attractor. The site is visible even from the air—this fact offers the opportunity to work with scale, composition, and symbolism in the vertical plane. The design should make use of this distinctiveness and reflect it in both the physical massing and the spatial solution.

A competition proposal may transcend the traditional model of a memorial site and offer the possibility of direct entry or interaction—physical as well as sensory. The memorial can thus become a space one can enter, traverse, or otherwise experience, on a visual, tactile, or spatial level. Such openness can enable visitors to have a personal experience and a deeper connection with the theme. It is expected that proposals will seek an original form of expression that goes beyond conventional conceptions of memorial places and delivers a contemporary, aesthetically powerful, and contextually sensitive result. What matters is the work's ability to communicate with different segments of the public—from specialists to a broad audience, from local residents to visitors to the city.

Competitors are invited to interweave the historical dimension with architectural and sculptural quality, to work with materials durable over time, to consider the memorial's visibility and perception from various distances and vantage points, and above all to create a work that will resonate enduringly with the place and its story.

Mladá Boleslav and the RAF

The memorial dedicated to Czechoslovak members of the Royal Air Force from the Mladá Boleslav region aims to dignifiedly recall the courage and sacrifices of the men and women who served during World War II. Many personalities from Mladá Boleslav and its surroundings left the country after the occupation of Czechoslovakia, joined the Allied struggle, and contributed significantly to the victory in air operations.

More than 2,400 Czechoslovak airmen served in the RAF, many of them from Central and Northern Bohemia. The Mladá Boleslav region had a tradition of aviation and technical education, linked both to local industry and to the aviation activities of Metoděj Vlach. These people often left families and homes, knowing their return was uncertain, and joined the RAF determined to fight for the freedom of their occupied homeland. Czechoslovak pilots served in well-known squadrons, such as the 310th, 311th, 312th, and 313th fighter and bomber squadrons, and took part in major operations, including the Battle of Britain in 1940. In this battle, they ranked among the most successful Allied pilots, gaining international recognition.



Their fates were often tied to heroism but also tragedy. Many fell in combat, while others, after returning home post-February 1948, were persecuted by the communist regime. The commemoration of the RAF thus has a dual dimension – honoring their heroic service abroad and recalling the difficult postwar history. Many surviving RAF members were stripped of ranks, expelled from the army, or imprisoned after 1948. Their contributions were only fully rehabilitated after 1989.

The memory of these events has been preserved in Mladá Boleslav not only through personal recollections but also through local institutions. The Metoděj Vlach Aviation Museum has long worked to document the history of Czechoslovak aviation and preserve the memory of its important representatives. The RAF memorial will be placed at the entrance to the aviation museum, linking historical context with the physical site.

Metoděj Vlach Aviation Museum – a living museum of aviation history

The Aviation Museum in Mladá Boleslav, named after Czech aviation pioneer Metoděj Vlach, offers a unique experience. Unlike traditional aviation museums, where exhibits are only for viewing, this museum is alive – most of the aircraft are airworthy replicas of historical planes.

Visitors can often witness not only careful maintenance and repairs but also ordinary operational activities such as refueling before flights. It is not uncommon to hear engines roar or watch a historic aircraft prepare for takeoff during a visit.

The exhibition provides a rare view into aviation history – from early flight attempts to interwar aircraft of the 20th century, with special emphasis on this period. Every aircraft on display is the result of precise craftsmanship and a commitment to historical accuracy. Many planes also regularly participate in airshows and public demonstrations, confirming their full operational capability.

Thus, the Metoděj Vlach Aviation Museum is not just an exhibition but a truly living museum, where the past takes off into the present.

Location

The memorial site is in front of the Metoděj Vlach Aviation Museum, near the navigation landmark “The Metoděj Vlach Airplane” – a stainless-steel construction based on original plans of a historical model.

The area is publicly accessible, connected to the parking lot, and closely linked to bus and car access to the museum. Two cycle routes run through the adjacent residential urban structure.

The design must respect height restrictions (set by surrounding buildings), engineering networks, and spatial requirements of the bus stop.

In red – plot no. 203/47 (cadastral area Chrást near Mladá Boleslav), owned by the Central Bohemian Region, administered by the Mladá Boleslav Museum, contributory organization.



Designated site area for the memorial: approx. 380 m² (including trees and networks).



Mladá Boleslav RAF Members

- Tomáš Bergmann, AC1 (Pvt), served as ground staff – Maintenance Assistant with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 18 July 1924 in Prague, died 11 June 1992.
- Bohuslav Brázda, F/Sgt (WO cand.), was a pilot with No. 310 Squadron RAF. Born 13 September 1916 in Rome, Italy, died 1991.
- Miroslav Červinka, F/Sgt (SSgt/Res Col), served as a pilot with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 18 October 1914 in Boreč near Mladá Boleslav, died 12 January 1943.
- František Duka, AC2 (Sgt), worked as an armourer at the RAF Depot. Born 18 April 1909 in Varnsdorf, Děčín District, died 1 May 1991.
- Vojtěch Formánek, P/O (Lt/Res Col), was a pilot with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 7 June 1918 in Dolní Bousov near Mladá Boleslav, died 25 May 1985.
- Karel Hájek, Sgt (SSgt/Res Maj), served as a navigator with No. 51 OTU RAF. Born 18 July 1913 in Struhy near Mladá Boleslav, died 9 March 1945.
- Josef Hašlar, Sgt (Cpl), was a wireless operator with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 14 August 1912 in Bitouchov, Semily District. Date of death unknown.
- František Havránek, F/Lt (Lt/Res Col), served as a navigator with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 5 October 1918 in Mladá Boleslav, died 31 October 1990.
- Josef Hofta, Cpl (Sgt), was a mechanic – Fitter II A with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 31 May 1902 in Katusice near Mladá Boleslav. Date of death unknown.
- Karel Janata, Sgt (Sgt/Res Col), served as a pilot with No. 310 Squadron RAF. Born 20 March 1918 in Kbel near Mladá Boleslav, died 11 September 1942.
- Antonín Jírovec, Cpl (Sgt/Res Maj), was a mechanic – Fitter II E with No. 310 Squadron RAF. Born 13 June 1908 in Nepřevázka near Mladá Boleslav, died 14 December 1972.
- Václav Keller, LAC (Sgt/Res Maj), served as a mechanic – Fitter with No. 312 Squadron RAF. Born 9 October 1913 in Dobrovice near Mladá Boleslav, died 14 October 1993.
- Miroslav Kredba, F/Lt (Capt/Res Col), was a pilot with No. 310 Squadron RAF. Born 29 January 1914 in Libichov near Mladá Boleslav, died 14 February 1942.
- Vladislav Krůta, MD, F/Lt (1Lt/Res Col), served as Medical Officer with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 27 June 1908 in Bělá pod Bezdězem near Mladá Boleslav, died 6 September 1979.
- Jaroslav Kulhavý, Sgt (Sgt/Res Lt Col), was a flight engineer with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 17 August 1919 in Mladá Boleslav, died 4 December 1944.
- Jindřich Libeňský, F/Sgt (SSgt/Res Maj), worked as an instrument repairer – Instrument Repair I with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 30 January 1912 in Mohelnice nad Jizerou near Mladá Boleslav, died 10 August 1992.
- Jaroslav Libich, F/Sgt (SSgt/Res Maj), served as a mechanic – Fitter I with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 9 January 1915 in Mladá Boleslav, died 11 June 1969.
- Oldřich Linka, F/Sgt (Sgt/Res Lt Col), was a wireless operator and air gunner with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 26 December 1919 in Vinařice near Mladá Boleslav, died 15 April 1989.
- Václav Lukavec, LAC (Cpl/Res Maj), served as a mechanic and armourer with No. 310 Squadron RAF. Born 31 March 1913 in Zdětín near Mladá Boleslav. Date of death unknown.
- Miloslav Jan Mansfeld, S/Ldr (Lt/Res Maj Gen), was a pilot with Nos. 111 and 68 Squadrons RAF, holder of DSO, DFC, and AFC. Born 14 December 1912 in Dalovice near Mladá Boleslav, died 22 October 1991.

- Antonín Novák, (rank and function not recorded). Born 25 May 1910 in Kosmonosy. Date of death unknown.
- Jaroslav Novák, F/O (2Lt/Res Col), served as a navigator with Nos. 311 and 246 Squadrons RAF. Born 6 June 1921 in Nové Benátky near Mladá Boleslav. Date of death unknown.
- Karel Stanislav Otta, Sgt (Cpl/Res Lt Col), was a wireless operator and air gunner with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 13 July 1921 in Mnichovo Hradiště near Mladá Boleslav. Date of death unknown.
- Karel Papoušek, F/O (2Lt/Res Col), served as a pilot with No. 167 Squadron RAF. Born 26 September 1922 in Mladá Boleslav, died 5 May 1943.
- Jaroslav Pecka, F/Sgt (SSgt/Res Lt Col), worked as a mechanic – Fitter II with No. 312 Squadron RAF. Born 17 October 1910 in Mladá Boleslav, died 6 November 1977.
- Vlastimil Prášek, W/O (SSgt), served as a mechanic – Fitter II E with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 31 May 1908 in Hlavenec near Mladá Boleslav. Date of death unknown.
- Miroslav Procházka, F/Sgt (Cpl cad./Res Col), was a pilot with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 9 October 1919 in Sýčina near Mladá Boleslav, died 18 November 1943.
- Vladimír Slánský, F/Lt (1Lt/Res Col), served as a pilot with Nos. 311 and 138 Squadrons RAF. Born 30 July 1913 in Mladá Boleslav, died 24 August 1993.
- Václav Smrčka, F/O (Lt/Res Col), was a pilot with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 25 May 1904 in Krumpach, Šumperk District, died 23 June 1970.
- Rudolf Svoboda, F/O (2Lt), served as a Wireless Officer with No. 310 Squadron RAF. Born 8 January 1912 in Mladá Boleslav. Date of death unknown.
- Miloslav Šefr, (rank and function not recorded). Born 18 May 1910 in Kosmonosy. Date of death unknown.
- Adam Šípek, W/O (Sgt/Res Maj), worked as a fitter and flight engineer with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 12 April 1912 in Lešňovice, Poland, died 6 October 1978.
- Josef Petr Štern, Sgt (2Lt), served as an air gunner with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 25 December 1920 in Prague. Date of death unknown.
- Miloslav Švitorka, LAC (PFC/Res Maj), was a flight mechanic with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 28 May 1903 in Nové Benátky near Mladá Boleslav, died 24 December 1986.
- Václav Tarantík, W/O (Sgt/Res Lt Col), served as a wireless operator with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 27 April 1911 in Hrdlořezy near Mladá Boleslav, died 13 July 1944.
- Jan Těšík, AC1 (PFC/Res Maj), was ground staff with No. 310 Squadron RAF. Born 8 March 1912 in Mladá Boleslav. Date of death unknown.
- Josef Vajnár, AC2 (Pvt), served as ground staff. Born 11 October 1921 in Zajekov near Mladá Boleslav. Date of death unknown.
- Vladimír Vrba, F/Sgt (Cpl/Res Lt Col), was a wireless operator and air gunner with No. 311 Squadron RAF. Born 21 July 1914 in Plužná near Mladá Boleslav. Date of death unknown.

Jury / Dependent



Daniel Marek
Deputy Mayor, Vice-Chair of the Jury



Petr Servus
Deputy Mayor



Markéta Tomčíková – alternate
Head of Department of Education, Culture,
and Sports



Gérard Keijsper – alternate
Project Manager, Department of Education,
Culture, and Sports

Jury / Independent



Katarína Magid Hládeková
artist, curator, Chair of the Jury



Kacha Kastner
curator, hunt kastner gallery



Maria Topolčanská
architect, architecture theorist



Tomáš Džadoň – alternate
artist