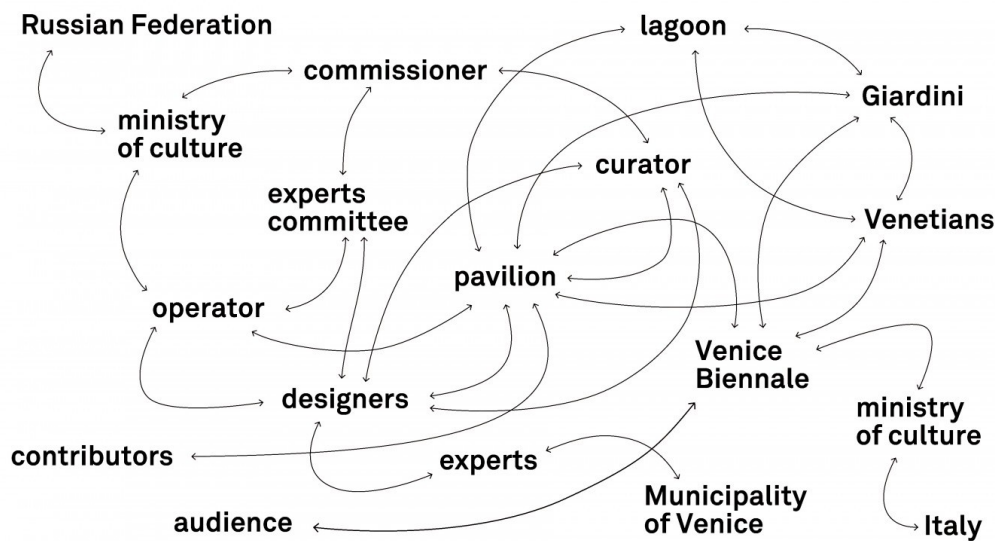


# Curatorial text introducing the project, Voices (Towards Other Institutions)



Open?, the 2020 Russian Federation Pavilion, explores the public role of cultural institutions in times of global crisis, within and beyond the framework of the 17th Venice Biennial of Architecture titled *How Will We Live Together?*

A few months into the project, the outbreak of COVID-19 virus suddenly and drastically changed our existence, urging us to question and reimagine the habits and points of reference that we used to take for granted. The reverberations of this tectonic shift have inevitably affected the project of the Russian Federation pavilion too, making its premises even more urgent. In a time of global and unprecedented crisis, the questions of *How Will We Live Together?* and which role institutions should and will play in this critical moment resonate with renewed timeliness.

The current pandemic has exacerbated the flaws of existing institutional models, and brought to the fore new and old forms of violence. It has shown the limits of the current transnational models of governance; it has made visible the short-sightedness of the neoliberal paradigm; it has corroborated the necessity to urgently remodel our presence on this planet and to expand our notion of politics; it has forced us to navigate the tension between the potentials and the risks of remote technologies and large scale

computation.

Two weeks before the Biennale announced the postponement of this year's edition to May 2021, the Russian Federation Pavilion had moved entirely online. Committed to function as an editorial and open-research project, pavilionrus.com acts as an accumulator of content, and wishes to initiate a debate on the public role, the presence, the politics and mechanics of institutions in post-pandemic times.

The backbone of this new, digital version of the Pavilion is *Voices*, a collection of interdisciplinary contributions and perspectives into new ways of thinking and building institutions. Premised on a reconsideration of traditional models, it will expand into an exploration of other possible constituencies and forms of collectiveness, across humans and other-than-humans agents, in search for emphatic and meaningful forms of alliances and kinships.

Engaging with a diverse cohort of people—from scholars to DJs, from curators and technologists, to environmentalists, activists and architects—the series will function as a fertile ground to build on for future editions of the Biennale.

*Voices* will feature on pavilionrus.com as well as on e-flux Architecture as a series of weekly contributions between June and November 2020.