

Urban Exchange : The Souk

RIBA Regional Student Ideas Competition

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The newly established RIBA Gulf Chapter has launched this scheme to celebrate the work demonstrated by students across the Gulf with focus on the theme of revitalisation of urban spaces. This new initiative forms part of the RIBA's mission to promote design excellence in the region, to address key issues in appropriate design, cultural response and environmental sustainability. I am sure students will rise to the challenge of this exciting opportunity and look forward to seeing designs which will both inspire and demonstrate the creativity of a future generation of architects

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– Sunand Prasad, RIBA President.

Competition Objective :

The competition aims to carry out new visions and proposals for 'the city' and is an opportunity to focus on re-addressing the street culture and its human activities to the urban context. The main objective of the competition is to create or restore a public place to celebrate space itself.

Introduction :

The competition seeks to restore or create a meaningful spatial arrangement to encourage people to interact in an area of a city where more contemporary town planning and architecture have disrupted the way in which we use our streets. These spaces should connect strongly into the local urban fabric to create a strong local identity, but one that encourages multi-cultural social and commercial opportunities.

The archetypal shopping mall is a mono-functional object that has lost the sense of place. The traditional medina, focussed around the souk expressed a sense of place and local cultural values. It provided shade. Souk shops, workshops and residences were never far apart. This included the mosque and other public spaces that provided a social focus for the community.

Competition Site and Brief :

The competition brief is to design a bazaar or souk and include activities relevant to its urban role, such as shops, some accommodation for short stay, workshops, public spaces, cafes, performance spaces, places of gathering or worship/mosque and landscaping. The site, to be chosen by the student, should be a minimum of 500m long and 100m wide within an existing urban context. It could be an area in decline, in need of rejuvenation. Alternatively the student might consider the removal of an existing group of buildings, and their replacement with a new development that restores lively street-space to the city or humanising a contemporary urban district.



Brief Requirements :

1. Space should be environmentally sustainable and hold classic values of ease of social interaction and enjoyment. A holistic design should incorporate environmentally sustainable technology and spatial forms that are meaningfully connected.
2. Historical values and continuity including multicultural ideas for a modern form that celebrates the unification of links within the urban matrix. Consider the role of conservation when appropriate.
3. Design for now and design to make it transformable and adaptable to the needs of the future with seamless links to the existing urban fabric.
4. Consider a site where urban fabric has been lost and restore the rich, varied and magical places where people can celebrate and enjoy the experience of space. Give a holistic view and process demonstrating innovation and inspiration. Consider a modern re-interpretation of the medina and the souk.
5. The proposals should elaborate on the mixed-use souk to include cafes, a mosque, an auditorium or other performance spaces.

Eligibility :

The competition is open to students registered in a nationally recognised School of Architecture in the GCC or GCC students studying architecture outside the GCC.

Judging Criteria :

Judging criteria will be as follows :

- response to site and context
- architectural quality
- inspiration and creativity
- response to and understanding of brief



Submission Instructions:

Competitors should submit their designs on 3 x A2 lightweight foam boards to include any architectural drawings they consider appropriate (such as plans, sections and elevations) and other three-dimensional representations as well as photos and images of the proposed concept plus supporting text on a separate A4 sheet of paper.

Multi-graphical presentation is encouraged but with a focus on freehand sketches rather than sole reliance on computer generated images. Models will not be accepted however photographs of models may be included within the A2 boards.

The official entry reference number should be clearly displayed on the design boards and the A4 text sheet. Please note that entries submitted without a clearly displayed official entry reference number shall be excluded from the competition.

The submission of each competitor should be contained in a single package and should be sent, carriage paid, addressed to:

Prof. Bassam Abu-Hijleh
Head of the Sustainable Design of the Built Environment Programme (SDBE)
The British University in Dubai (BUiD)
PO Box 502216 Dubai

Packages should be clearly marked 'RIBA Gulf Chapter Student Competition' to arrive no later than close of business on Tuesday 8th September 2009.

In addition competitors should submit the full design on a CD-ROM and send to the RIBA Competitions Office, 6 Melbourne Street, Leeds, LS2 7PS, UK clearly marked 'RIBA Gulf Chapter Student Competition' to arrive no later than close of business on Tuesday 8th September 2009. The CD-ROM should include all information provided on the 3 x A2 sheets and accompanying text. Please ensure the CD-ROM also bears the official entry reference number.

Judging

The judging process will take place in the UAE at the British University of Dubai.

Jury Panel :

The jury panel, which may be subject to change, is as follows :

- Sir Michael Hopkins CBE (Chair)
- Yasser Elsheshtawy, UAE University, UAE
- Adil A. Al-Mumin, Kuwait University, Kuwait
- Peter Jackson, Architect Advisor, HH Ruler's Office, Sharjah, UAE
- George Katodrytis, American University of Sharjah, UAE

Competition Timetable :

The timetable, which may be subject to change, is as follows :

Brief available :	11th May 2009
Deadline for written questions :	16th June 2009
Response to questions :	23rd June 2009
Registration deadline :	18th August 2009
Submission deadline :	8th September 2009
Awards ceremony :	21st October 2009

Prizes :

1st Prize - £2,500
2nd Prize - £1,500
3rd Prize - £750

Certificates to be presented by the RIBA President.
Selected competition entries will be displayed in a travelling exhibition set up by the RIBA.

Competition Language :

The competition documents and entries will be in English only.

Questions :

Questions must be addressed in writing to the RIBA (riba.competitions@inst.riba.org) to arrive no later than 16th June. A statement in response to all questions will be uploaded to the RIBA website

Anonymity :

Entries will be submitted and judged anonymously. No identification other than the code provided by the RIBA Competitions Office should be included.

A successful competitor must be able to satisfy the judges that he/she is the bona fide author of the design that he/she has submitted.

The organisers will exercise all reasonable care, but will not be responsible for the loss or damage to drawings. Competitors are advised to retain copies of all material submitted.

Disqualification :

A design shall be excluded from the competition :

- if received after the time stated in the competition conditions
- if in the opinion of the judges, it does not substantially meet the requirements of the brief
- if a competitor discloses his or her identity
- if any of the requirements of the competition brief and conditions are disregarded.

Copyright :

The ownership of the copyright in the work of all competitors will be in accordance with the Copyright and Patent Act 1988, ie copyright rests with the author.

Publicity :

At the conclusion of the competition, the RIBA will publish the winning names after communicating it individually to each of the competitors. All the designs will be retained by the organisers who reserve the right to publish and exhibit the designs.

Awards Ceremony :

The results of the competition will be announced at a high profile ceremony to coincide with the formal launch of the RIBA Gulf Chapter on 21st October at the British Embassy in Abu Dhabi. Supported by the UKTI, the launch will be a fully multi-disciplinary event, engaging with key clients, consultants and contractors that influence the market for the built environment.

How to Register :

To register competitors must download and complete the registration form and return it to the RIBA Competitions Office to receive the unique entry code. This code should be included clearly on the submission. The registration deadline is 18th August 2009.

Competition Management :

The competition is being managed by the RIBA Competitions Office :

RIBA Competitions Office

6 Melbourne Street

Leeds LS2 7PS

T : ++44 (0) 113 2341335

F : ++44 (0) 113 2460744

E : riba.competitions@inst.riba.org

W : www.architecture.com/competitions