

STRICTLY EMBARGOED FOR 0.01AM BST ON THURSDAY 5 MAY 2016

# SCIENCE ISLAND INTERNATIONAL DESIGN CONTEST FOR THE NEW NATIONAL SCIENCE AND INNOVATION CENTRE OF LITHUANIA TO BE ORGANISED BY MALCOLM READING CONSULTANTS



View from Science Island looking to the old town

## Anonymous single-stage design contest for exceptional island site in UNESCO creative city Kaunas will launch in June 2016

Kaunas City Municipality has appointed Malcolm Reading Consultants (MRC) to develop the brief and run the design contest for the new National Science and Innovation Centre of Lithuania.

The anonymous single-stage Science Island International Design Contest will launch in June and conclude in late autumn 2016, with the new Centre scheduled to open in 2018. The project will further enhance Kaunas' profile as one of the Baltic's key knowledge and cultural hubs and as an increasingly popular visitor destination. Considered Lithuania's best student city, this former capital is home to the country's leading universities and is distinctive for its Modernist and pre-war architecture as well as a superlative collection of nearly 50 museums. Kaunas is one of UNESCO's designated global creative cities.

The project centres on Nemunas Island, adjacent to the Žalgiris Arena and in close proximity to Kaunas' historic Centras district. Science Island will celebrate recent achievements in science and global technologies, with the aim of inspiring visitors to expand their knowledge and support innovation in these fields. The Centre will focus particularly on environmental themes and ecosystems, demonstrating sustainability and future energy technologies in the design of its own building.

**The Mayor of Kaunas, Visvaldas Matijošaitis said:**

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*Science Island is a defining project for Kaunas. It will position the city for the future to develop a smart society attuned to learning, innovation and creativity.*

*We are delighted to be working with Malcolm Reading Consultants on the competition and look forward to the launch of the contest.*

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**Malcolm Reading, MRC chairman said:**

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*We are honoured and pleased to work with the City of Kaunas to develop Lithuania's National Science and Innovation Centre. The Baltic region is a crucible for originality in the fields of cultural and scientific innovation and this hugely appealing project has both a mission of great relevance for our times and an exceptional island setting.*

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A specialist consultancy in international design competitions, MRC will shape the architectural brief for the project, develop the design criteria, advise on jury selection, launch and promote the competition through a dedicated microsite, and manage the tender process. The consultancy's portfolio includes projects for the Natural History Museum (London); the Latvian Museum of Contemporary Art; the Museum of London; Guggenheim Helsinki; the Victoria & Albert Museum; and the award-winning UK Pavilions for Shanghai Expo 2010 and Milan Expo 2015.

Final preparations for the competition are in progress, with full details to be announced at the launch. Interested architects and designers are invited to visit <https://competitions.malcolmreading.co.uk/scienceisland> to sign up and receive notification of the competition launch.

Ends



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