

MEDIA RELEASE

2 SEPTEMBER 2015

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GALLAUDET UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL DESIGN COMPETITION LAUNCHED



- \$60M public realm-focused project is expected to revitalize the historic campus and create a new vibrant, cultural district within Washington, D.C.
- Gallaudet University is a global center of Deaf Culture and the only bilingual liberal arts university in the world where academic programs for deaf and hard of hearing students are conducted in American Sign Language and English
- Design teams are challenged to rethink the sensory experience of the campus through the Deaf perspective and create an exemplar development
- Significant global interest expressed with nearly 700 designers subscribing to the competition's pre-launch alert
- Gallaudet's community is warmly invited to send ideas, sketches and videos through the Shape Gallaudet initiative

MEDIA RELEASE

2 SEPTEMBER 2015



Gallaudet University, in Washington, D.C., along with its development partner, The JBG Companies, and London-based competition organizers Malcolm Reading Consultants today [September 2, 2015] launched the Gallaudet University International Design Competition. The two-stage design competition seeks an outstanding multidisciplinary design team to create a new campus gateway and redefine the University's urban edge as a vibrant, mixed-use, creative and cultural district.

The \$60M public realm-focused project is expected to be delivered in multiple phases. The project will position Gallaudet's campus and its surrounding community as a focal point for the U.S. capital's newly emerging creative economy.

Gallaudet University is the only bilingual liberal arts university in the world where academic and research programs for deaf and hard of hearing students are conducted in both American Sign Language (ASL) and English. An internationally-recognized center for Deaf Culture, Gallaudet is at the center of an emerging renaissance known as Deaf Gain: a paradigm shift that switches the emphasis from hearing loss to the cultural, creative and cognitive gains of deaf ways of being in the world (see notes to editors).

The historic core of the University's campus was originally designed by Frederick Law Olmsted (known for New York's Central Park) in 1866. Gallaudet is immediately adjacent to some of Washington, D.C.'s, fastest-growing and most dynamic mixed-use neighborhoods, and is less than two miles northeast of the U.S. Capitol Building.

As well as reaching out to international designers, the competition will also be asking for ideas, insights and inspirations from the Gallaudet community, and supporters, both stateside and internationally, through the Shape Gallaudet initiative. The best insights will be incorporated in the briefing to shortlisted design teams at the beginning of the competition's second stage. The competition will be the first time DeafSpace Guidelines, developed at Gallaudet, will be applied to the public realm (see notes to editors).

Fred Weiner, CEO of the Gallaudet University Foundation and Director of the 6th Street Development, said:

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Gallaudet is a place like no other in the world. We're witnessing Washington, D.C.'s rapid metamorphosis into one of the most dynamic cities in North America. But we're also at the heart of the global deaf community, which is why we need an inspired team to create an environment that bridges the deaf and hearing worlds, celebrates human diversity, and has the potential to become a global model.

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MEDIA RELEASE

2 SEPTEMBER 2015

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THE JBG COMPANIES® GALLAUDET UNIVERSITY

Hansel Bauman, Executive Director, Campus Design and Planning, Gallaudet University, said:

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This is such a rich project, from the regeneration of the site, to engaging the community, to the inspiration that can come from design that is rooted in Deaf experiences. This groundbreaking project represents the first time DeafSpace principles have been used to inspire a public realm designed to heighten sensory experience and cultural exchange for people from all walks of life.

It will give the University a gateway, which expresses a more open character, and shifts the focus of the campus back to its much-valued historic heart while also rejuvenating the public realm, making it fully inclusive and inviting.

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Bryan Moll, JBG Senior Vice President, said:

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This is truly a remarkable and transformational project. We're very excited to be teaming up with Gallaudet University and look forward to the competition unfolding

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Malcolm Reading, Competition Organizer and Chairman of Malcolm Reading Consultants, said:

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The competition has been eagerly anticipated with nearly 700 international architects signaling their interest following our pre-launch announcement in July.

Expressing Gallaudet's culture and heritage through design, and creating a memorable destination within one of the world's great capital cities is a fascinating brief for architects and quite outside the normal run of projects.

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Multidisciplinary teams are encouraged, Gallaudet and the competition organizers hope to see these include architects, landscape architects and specialists in human behavior, performing and fine arts, communication technology, wayfinding and engineering disciplines, among others.

No design is required at the first stage of the competition; competitors will be assessed on their understanding of the institution and project, team composition and past experience. The (up-to-five) design teams who reach the second stage will address the design of a new

MEDIA RELEASE

2 SEPTEMBER 2015



Gateway Plaza, a revitalization of the campus' historic Olmsted Green, and the creation of a new public realm that will integrate the campus with the vibrant urban fabric of a wider regeneration project within Washington, D.C., including the emerging Florida Avenue Market area.

Teams will need to produce design proposals for a visitors' pavilion located within the Gateway Plaza, as well as conceptual proposals for a landmark building at the epicenter of the campus, which will command views across a number of strategic routes.

An honorarium of \$50,000 U.S. dollars will be awarded to each of the shortlisted teams following selection of the winner.

Full details of the competition and how to enter a Request for Proposal (for design teams) or submit ideas and insights to the Shape Gallaudet initiative (community and supporters) are available on the dedicated website:

<https://competitions.malcolmreading.co.uk/gallaudet>

Both competitors and Shape Gallaudet contributors have until 12:00 EDT October 1, 2015 to enter stage one of the competition.

The shortlisted teams, Shape Gallaudet contributors, jury and other specialists will take part in a colloquium, or discussion, and charrette (also known as a live design critique) during the fall. A public exhibition of the finalists' designs will be held in 2015/2016 and the winning team is expected to be announced in February 2016. The jury will be announced in due course. Both the ensuing project and the parent regeneration initiative will be run by Gallaudet University in partnership with JBG, who are experienced in collaborating with renowned global architects.

The competition is being organized by Malcolm Reading Consultants. Please follow the competition website for updates on the competition and further announcements.

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MEDIA RELEASE

2 SEPTEMBER 2015

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MEDIA RELEASE

2 SEPTEMBER 2015



NOTES TO EDITORS

- **Gallaudet University**

Gallaudet University, federally chartered in 1864, is a bilingual, diverse, multicultural institution of higher education that ensures the intellectual and professional advancement of deaf and hard of hearing individuals through American Sign Language and English. Gallaudet maintains a proud tradition of research and scholarly activity and prepares its graduates for career opportunities in a highly competitive, technological, and rapidly changing world.

<http://www.gallaudet.edu>

- **The JBG Companies**

Headquartered in Chevy Chase, Md., The JBG Companies is a private real estate investment firm that develops, owns and manages office, residential, hotel and retail properties. The company has more than \$10 billion in assets under management and development in the Washington, DC area. Since 1960, JBG has been active in the areas where it invests, striving to positively impact local communities. For more information, please visit www.JBG.com or find us on Twitter [@TheJBGCompanies](https://twitter.com/TheJBGCompanies) and Facebook facebook.com/TheJBGCompanies.

- **Malcolm Reading Consultants**

London-based Malcolm Reading Consultants (MRC) is a strategic architectural consultancy which specializes in the selection of contemporary designers. MRC believes in the power of design to create new perceptions and act as an inspiration – whether at the local level, or internationally.

The consultancy offers a service to find the very best designers for clients with capital projects, whether through open-international, or private-invited competitions. Recent competitions include those for the Guggenheim Helsinki, the Art Mill, Qatar, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park's Culture & Education Quarter, the Mumbai City Museum, the UK Pavilion at Milan Expo 2015 and New College, Oxford.

<http://malcolmreading.co.uk>

MEDIA RELEASE

2 SEPTEMBER 2015

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• Deaf Gain and Deaf Culture

Historically deaf has been associated with the loss of hearing and is commonly viewed by society in general as a limiting disability. Today, Gallaudet is at the center of an emerging renaissance known as Deaf Gain: a paradigm shift that changes the emphasis from hearing loss to the '*unique cognitive, creative, and cultural gains manifested through deaf ways of being in the world.*' (H-Dirksen L. Bauman and Joseph J. Murray, Deaf Gain: Raising The Stakes For Human Diversity)

Deaf Culture is a unique, vibrant culture that thrives through sign language. As deafness often only extends one generation deep, with the majority of deaf people being from hearing families, the deaf community is often most evident around social institutions such as deaf schools and colleges. These social institutions extend the experience of being deaf beyond an auditory condition; they signify participation in a cultural community, analogous to a national or ethnic identity.

Deaf Culture has its own indigenous language, arts, traditions, social norms, and values—all which reflect deaf people's distinctive identity and way of experiencing the world that is just as rich as any hearing culture.

• DeafSpace

Vision and touch are the primary means of spatial awareness and orientation for most deaf people. Many use sign language, a visual-kinetic mode of communication, and maintain a strong cultural identity built around these sensibilities and shared life experiences. Our built environment, which has largely been constructed by and for hearing individuals, presents a variety of surprising challenges to which deaf people have responded with a particular way of altering their surroundings to fit their unique ways-of-being. Through these daily acts of customization, deaf people construct DeafSpace—a combined architectural aesthetic and design process expressive of deaf sensibilities.

Since 2005 the DeafSpace Project, a novel partnership between the Department of ASL Deaf Studies and campus architect Hansel Bauman, has developed the DeafSpace Design Guidelines, a catalogue of over one hundred and fifty distinct DeafSpace architectural patterns. The Guidelines address the three major touch points between deaf experiences and the built environment: Visual Language and Architecture, Sensory Reach, Wayfinding and Architecture and Deaf Culture and Architecture.

Find out more about DeafSpace at http://www.gallaudet.edu/campus_design/deafspace.html