



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# MALCOLM READING CONSULTANTS APPOINTED TO RUN MK:U INTERNATIONAL DESIGN COMPETITION



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## Competition to launch in early 2019

Malcolm Reading Consultants (MRC) has been appointed to run the international design competition for MK:U, a 'new model' university in the heart of Milton Keynes.

The independent architectural competition organiser will launch the competition in early 2019. The announcement of the winning design team and concept design is expected next summer.

One of the fastest growing cities in Europe - expected to comprise 500,000 people by 2050 - Milton Keynes (MK) is widely recognised as a test bed for 'smart city thinking' and is at the heart of the Cambridge - Milton Keynes - Oxford growth arc, a key engine of the United Kingdom's knowledge economy.



MK:U is a joint partnership between Cranfield University and Milton Keynes (MK) Council. It is expected to open in 2023, eventually serving 15,000 students. MK:U's focus will be on a vocational and STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) undergraduate curriculum in key areas including digital, cyber, autonomy, robotics and artificial intelligence.

MK:U is one of the flagship projects of the MK Futures 2050 programme, which supports MK Council's ambition to create a city of opportunity for all.

Interested architects and designers can now sign up to receive notification of the launch on the competition website's holding page at [competitions.malcolmreading.com/mku](https://competitions.malcolmreading.com/mku).

Professor Lynette Ryals, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Cranfield University, Director, Cranfield School of Management, and Programme Director, MK:U, said:

**“The competition will set out a fascinating design challenge – to create a world-class university that offers a new model of education at the heart of the fast-growing, high-tech Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford arc.**

**“We will be searching for outstanding multi-disciplinary teams that connect with our vision and relate to Milton Keynes – a smart city with an entrepreneurial mindset and a great place to try out new technologies and future ways of living.”**

Councillor Pete Marland, Leader of Milton Keynes Council, said:

**“The design competition is a once in a generation opportunity to develop a landmark building to showcase a UK city. We look forward to launching the competition and engaging with the design community. This is an ambitious project to hugely improve the quality of life in Milton Keynes and deliver a world-class university in the city.”**

Competition Director, Malcolm Reading, said:

**“We are delighted to be appointed to run this open two-stage international competition. Milton Keynes is at the heart of the UK's knowledge economy and the new university proposes a forward-looking model of higher education with the emphasis on in-demand skills and retaining local talent.”**



MRC will work with MK Council and Cranfield University to devise the competition materials, liaise with stakeholders and ensure absolute independence in the competition process.

An independent jury will assess the design submissions at stage two and select a winner. There will be a public exhibition (physical and online) of all the second-stage designs before the jury meets.

Malcolm Reading Consultants' recent work includes competitions for the Cambridge to Oxford Connection (UK), University College Dublin (Ireland), Gallaudet University (Washington, D.C., US), the Royal College of Art (UK), Science Island (Kaunas, Lithuania), New College, Oxford (UK) and Homerton College, Cambridge (UK). MRC is currently preparing the international design competition for the new Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences at Parramatta, Sydney, Australia.

#### COMPETITION MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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#### IMAGES

Images can be downloaded here:

[dropbox.com/sh/29atjyr0wwpdca5/AADUgj5xMPICKNJORa\\_BfLHua?dl=0](https://dropbox.com/sh/29atjyr0wwpdca5/AADUgj5xMPICKNJORa_BfLHua?dl=0)

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

### About MK:U

MK:U will be a "new model" university, designed to meet urgent technological and societal challenges head on.

It represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to develop a university with business, for business, equipping students for future careers in emerging fields. Subjects such as robotics, artificial intelligence, cyber and analytics will ensure that students at MK:U are equipped for the 21st century workplace. Its learning model will focus on the practical knowledge and skills needed by business to solve problems and generate new growth in a digital age.

MK:U's ambition is to completely transform how we think about higher education.

[www.cranfield.ac.uk/mku](http://www.cranfield.ac.uk/mku)



## About Milton Keynes Council

Established in 1967 as the most successful product of the new towns movement and a cultural artefact in its own right, Milton Keynes (MK) has been the fastest growing city and economy in the UK for the past 30 years. Milton Keynes Council is its unitary authority, delivering more than 250 services to 270,000 diverse citizens.

The MK Futures 2050 Commission was initiated by the council in 2015 as a project to explore the long term futures for MK as it emerges as a UK city and economy of increasing significance. Big projects for the city's future include the creation of MK:U, improving the city centre, and leading the way on smart, shared, sustainable mobility.

[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk)

## About Cranfield University

Cranfield is a specialist postgraduate university that is a global leader for education and transformational research in technology and management.

We are focused on the specialist themes of aerospace, defence and security, energy and power, environment and agrifood, manufacturing, transport systems, and water. Cranfield School of Management is a world leader in management education and research.

We are home to many world-class, large-scale facilities which enhance our teaching and research. We are the only university in Europe to own and run an airport and to have airline status.

Cranfield teaches over 4,500 postgraduate students each year and employs 1,500 academic and support staff. We have the largest number of engineering master's students in the UK. Our staff-to-student ratio is one of the best for any university in the UK (one member of academic staff to every seven students).

We work closely with business, industry and government across the world. Through our industry partnerships, applied research projects and our executive education and professional development programmes, we currently work with over 1,500 companies and organisations.

We are ranked number one in the UK for research income from industry per academic, with 81% of our research classed as world-leading or internationally excellent by REF (Research Excellence Framework, 2014).

[www.cranfield.ac.uk](http://www.cranfield.ac.uk)



## About Malcolm Reading Consultants

Malcolm Reading Consultants (MRC) is a strategic consultancy that helps clients to imagine and define contemporary environments, both built and natural. MRC is the leading specialist in devising and managing design competitions internationally. MRC believes in the power of design to create new perceptions and act as an inspiration.

Recent work includes competitions for the Cambridge to Oxford Connection (UK); University College Dublin (Ireland); Gallaudet University (Washington, D.C., US); Kaunas M.K. Čiurlionis Concert Centre (Lithuania); the Royal College of Art (UK); the V&A (UK); the Mumbai City Museum (India); and new buildings for the UK's New College, Oxford and Homerton College, Cambridge.

[www.malcolmreading.com](http://www.malcolmreading.com)