
UIA-HYP CUP 2026 International Student Competition

in Architectural Design

Design Brief

Theme: Architecture in Transformation

Topic: Villagers urban, suburban, rural

Jury Chairman: Philip Cox

Registration Deadline: 24:00 (GMT+8) September 20th, 2026

Q&A Deadline: 24:00 (GMT+8) September 30th, 2026

Submission Deadline: 24:00 (GMT+8) October 10th, 2026

Jury Review: November 2026

I. Background

"UIA-HYP Cup International Student Competition in Architectural Design" was initiated in 2012. It is internationally sponsored by the Union International des Architectes (UIA), organized by the School of Architecture, Tianjin University and Urban Environment Design (UED) Magazine. Shanghai HYP-ARCH Architectural Design Consultant Co. Ltd. is the Exclusive Naming Sponsor. It is an annual architectural competition which has been successfully held for 14 editions. Each year, the UIA-HYP Cup is chaired by an internationally renowned architectural master, and the jury panel is selected from among the world's most outstanding architects and deans from schools of architecture. To boost the architectural education which mainly focuses on basic skill training in its conventional and progressive system, UIA-HYP Cup International Student Competition takes the role as an external platform for student to embrace a brand-new thinking approach in order to improve their comprehensive problem-solving skill, meanwhile it is also some kind of headhunter for discovering emerging elite architects.

II.Content

Topic: Villagers urban, suburban, rural

With rural drift to the cities happening in most places of the world many of these have become megalopolises holding up to 25 million people and some more which defy the concept of city as we traditionally know it having identity that can be comprehended.

We can understand the concepts of central business districts CBD of having some distinctiveness and visual realisation however the whole question of community and social unit comes into question. Does it exist anymore, where is the sense of place of living, the genius loci of our being.

The social unit of who we work with, socialise, live with, the environment in which we live is under question as we increase the densities of our cities through high rise residential buildings creating a spreading sameness a loss of identity that affords little opportunity for social; inter reactive process to take place.

The rural drift to the cities continuing is questioned as affordability in cities and work opportunity is uncertain, and coupled with environmental concerns such clean air, energy resources, smaller communities or village units are being examined as viable alternatives.

We are on the threshold of establishing self-sufficient sustainable communities that can produce their own power through solar and other means, collect their own water, manage their waste products, recycle material of the past, build in the vernacular tradition using materials that have zero carbon impact. There are many examples of communities both urban and rural growing their own produce.

IT and AI are producing a different society where work can operate remotely and does not need to be confined to place or a commercial office as we know it. Factories and places of manufacture are increasingly robotic and mechanised. This allows a greater freedom for choice of habitat, whether the preference is in the city with its cultural advantages, suburbia that allows contact with a broader landscape or rural that is integrated with the earth itself.

Each of these opportunities of living require the concept of village, where a collection of people have interface with each other and share common values, sharing such things as schools, retail areas and market, community gatherings and meeting halls, where cultural events such as music and art can flourish, and most importantly where the architecture of the village expresses the people themselves in a vernacular way.

There is so much discussion of loss of socialisation, mental health issues that have resulted from the loss of village life. The sense of belonging to a place represented by its architecture is important and how that architecture helps in the lives of the people in all ways, environmentally and socially, the sense of identity and belonging.

The inclusion of passive energy technologies into the architecture of our time is important for our survival and how architecture can absorb those technologies without treating them as uncomfortable attachments.

The problem will be to select one of the three ways of living and to demonstrate how communities can be created that have relevance. For those choosing urban, a disused industrial area can be chosen or the reorganisation of a higher dense area of the city that can be redesigned to provide new values. Suburban communities should demonstrate cohesion, not sprawl and how to plan a cohesive community whilst those choosing rural can demonstrate the new architecture of sustainability and landscape integration representing true vernacular values and identity.

Format for presentation:

Three A1 boards. There is no limit to the format of the boards. Make your projects arresting and refreshing.

Plans, sections, elevations and renderings can be used when needed.

A video no longer than 2:00 minutes.

- The video is not allowed to show personally identifiable information.
- Axonometric drawings, plans, sections, and renderings are expected.
- It is recommended to pay attention to the concept of green environmental protection and the utilization of new energy, and encouraged to use new technologies and methods for data collection, analysis, and visual expression.
- Cited data on the existing context is strongly encouraged.
- If AI tools are used to generate drawings and videos, contestants are requested to clearly label them.
- Your submission must be subtitled in English.

III.Organizations:

International Supporter: Union International des Architectes (UIA)



Hosting Organization: School of Architecture, Tianjin University; School of Architecture, Inner Mongolia University of Technology; Urban Environment Design (UED) Magazine

Advising Institutions: Chinese National Evaluation Committee of Higher Architecture Education

Exclusive Naming Sponsor: Shanghai HYP-ARCH Architectural Design Consultant Co. Ltd.

Co-organizers: School of Architecture, Tsinghua University; College of Architecture and Urban Planning, Tongji University; School of Architecture, Southeast University; School of Architecture, South China University of Technology; School of Architecture, Harbin Institute of Technology; School of Architecture, Xi'an University of Architecture and Technology; Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning, Chongqing University.

IV.Prize and Award:

1st Prize (1 team) :

Certificate and 80,000 RMB (around 11,000 USD, before tax);

2nd Prize (5 teams) :

Certificate and 15,000 RMB (around 2,050 USD, before tax);

3rd Prize (12 teams) :

Certificate and 8,000 RMB (around 1,100 USD, before tax);

Honorable Mentions (several teams): Certificate;

Advisors of prize-winning projects will also be awarded with certificates.

(Note: All prizes are paid in RMB. USD equivalents are approximate and provided for reference only; actual USD value may differ depending on the exchange rate at the time of payment.)

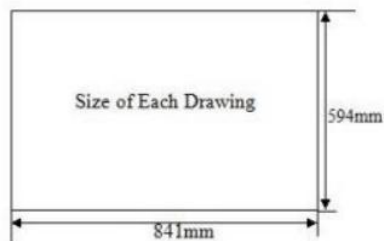
V.Competition Procedure

1. This is a fair competition open to all architecture and relevant major students around the globe. Full-time on-campus architecture students from accredited institutions (including master and PhD candidates and graduate students of 2026) can participate alone or as a team with team members of no more than four people. In addition, the advisors—who must be university or college teachers—of no more than two.
2. Only the team leader will be contacted when necessary if students participate as a team.
3. Log on, click “Registration” to fill out the registration form and submit online.
4. After filled in the registration form, participants will get a serial number (please take care to preserve it as each participant/participating team has only one serial number).
5. The registration fee for the domestic group is 200 RMB per team. Once paid, the registration fee is non-refundable. Participants will be assigned to either the domestic group or the international group according to their affiliated university. Universities in mainland China are classified as the domestic group, while universities in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan regions of China, as well as overseas universities, belong to the international group. Mixed teams consisting of members from both domestic and overseas institutions shall register as the domestic group.
6. Please submit the digital version of drawings and related documents to uedmedia@163.com, before the submission deadline, 24:00 (GMT+8) October 10th, 2026. The organizing committee accepts no printed version. Entries will be printed and exhibited together in due time.
7. With the assistance of the committee, juries will meet and decide the winners.
8. Competition Inquiries: uedmedia@163.com

VI.Submissions

1. Three JPG-format drawings and one MP4-format video will be output and presented by the organizer. Package the drawings, video, and relevant documents into a single zip archive and email to: uedmedia@163.com with subject line: "Competition ID + Entry Title (both Chinese and English titles are required)".

2. Please submit the digital version of drawings and related documents to uedmedia@163.com. Please include "Competition+ Registration Serial Number" in the e-mail subject line. If the entry is too large to be attached, please upload to an online file sharing website such as "We transfer" or "Google drive" and provide the download link in the submission email. Entries will be printed and laid out by the committee.
3. Submit an "Original Work Statement" with signatures from all group members. (Template available under "Download Documents" section on the competition's official website)
4. Scale and dimensions must be in metric units.
5. Documents: Recognizable scanned copy of passport and student card should be attached in the e-mail. Students themselves are responsible for the authenticity of the documents.
6. Entry Requirements
 - a. Specification: Please use A1-sized drawings (841mm × 594mm) in landscape orientation. Each entry must include three drawings.



- b. Content: Site-plan that can fully express the design intention; plans, elevations and sections; perspective drawing, illustration and a design description of about 500 words (to be integrated in the pictures and drawings). There is no limitation on proportion.
 - c. Video Specifications: (the video should be a more accurate and clear expression of the design ideas, project process, etc.) Description is also needed for the main content of the video.
 - d. A TXT document must be attached in the e-mails of the submission, which include participants' name, Competition ID, e-mail address, mobile phone number, name and contact information of

the advisor (if any), the full name of the school and department, title and brief introduction of the submitted work.

e. Drawing layout requirements:

1) Please submit the drawing layout (300 dpi in resolution at least) in the version of jpg, and name the picture according to the content (such as XXX plan 1).

2) The video must be submitted with English subtitles, no more than 3 minutes long. Please name the video according to the title of the work (e.g. XXX video).

3) Please submit the text information in the version of TXT in the folder named by the participant(s)' name.

4) Submission Requirement: Please submit one file in the format of zip or rar and the file size should be between 50mb- 150mb. This file should contain three folders, they are:

(1) Drawing: Three drawings

(2) Video: One Video

(3) Identity Certificate: Scanned ID photo (or Student Card and Passport)

(4) Text (TXT) and Original Work Statement

VII. Competition Regulation

1. Individual participants and groups must agree with and follow the competition requirements and regulations. The organizing committee reserves its right of final interpretation.

2. Entries with words or pictures relating to the name or department of participants in the digital drawings will be disqualified from the competition.

3. Participants have the copyright, while the organization committee can exercise all other rights except authorship.

4. Entries that have been submitted to other competitions, published on other public occasions

or found to be similar to other works in terms of design ideas will be disqualified from the competition.

5. Juries cannot act as advisers to participants; otherwise participants will be disqualified from the competition.

6. Each participant can only register in one team.

7. Each group is only allowed to submit one piece of work. Repeated submission is prohibited.

Once discovered, the organizing committee owns the right to choose any one of them.

8. The information of the team is based on the final submission of the TXT file.

9. It is recommended to focus on the concepts of green environmental protection and new energy utilization methods, and the use of intelligent technology is highly encouraged.

VIII. Dates and Deadline

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Q&A Deadline: 24:00 (GMT+8) September 30th, 2026

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IX. Contacts

Competition Website: <http://hypcup.uedmagazine.net/>

Competition Email: uedmedia@163.com

Mainland China: 0086-17640248261 (09:00-18:00 GMT+8)

Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and abroad: 0086-13889162840 (09:00-18:00 GMT+8);