

OVERVIEW

**Commissions, Boards and Work Programmes
2026–2029 Term**



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UIA WORKING BODIES FOR THE 2026–2029 TERM

The UIA is broadly recognised as the only global representative of the architectural profession, producing knowledge and formulating policies and positions to advance architecture and the interests of the profession, that have the weight of international agreement. In this context, UIA's Working Bodies, established by its Council to address matters of major importance to society and to the architectural profession on a global scale, are important contributors to UIA's mission and critical aims.

The study of a wide range of matters that in various ways are related to the aims of the Union may be entrusted to Working Bodies such as Commissions, Boards and Work Programmes.

Commissions address enduring thematic areas that are fundamental to the profession on a global scale, such as Education, Professional Practice and Sustainability. Their permanent nature and broad scope provide structural continuity and guidance.

Boards provide consultancy in specific domains such as Competitions and Awards, and the Validation of Educational Programmes and Systems. They are permanent in nature with a focused scope. They must ensure expertise and competence in their respective fields of consultancy.

Work Programmes are established within a defined thematic area to address specific matters of major importance to society and to the critical aims of the Union. They reflect the Council's strategic priorities.

More information is available in [Appendix III of the UIA Articles and Bylaws](#).

For the 2026–2029 Term, the following Working Bodies have been approved:

COMMISSIONS

Architectural Education

The roots of the UIA Education Commission (EDUCOM) date back to 1995 when the first effort to develop the UNESCO-UIA Charter commenced.

The Architectural Education Commission has the key purpose to act as a think-tank for architectural education policy, proposing guidelines, documents, proposals, and views related to education, teaching and learning practices and outcomes. The aim is to facilitate access to high-quality professional education globally, focusing on increasing the international mobility of academic architectural credentials and on developing a shared understanding of the role of education in fostering a distinguished profession.

More information on the Architectural Education Commission is available [here](#).

Professional Practice

The Professional Practice Commission (PPC) sustains and implements "The UIA Accord on International Standards of Professionalism in Architectural Practice". The Accord is intended to guide member section professionals, governments and lawmakers in the promotion of the global mobility of architects.

The commission continuously reviews the current relevance of the standards of practice and develops new documents that are reviewed and adopted by the UIA Council on a regular basis.



More information on the Professional Practice Commission is available [here](#).

Sustainable Cities and Communities

Council has approved the Sustainable Cities and Communities Commission (SCCCOM) for the 2026–2029 term, a new Commission with its origins in the UN 17 SDGs and Sustainability Commissions. As the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals fall increasingly off track and the UN begins to look beyond the 2030 Agenda, the Commission wants to offer a new lens: one that reads sustainability through the built environment itself, placing communities at the core and recognising cities as the space where global targets must meet local culture and context.

In an era of climate change, population shifts and unprecedented urbanisation, cities and communities sit at the centre of the sustainability challenge. This positions the UIA, through the SCCCOT, to contribute to the UN's evolving agenda through the knowledge and everyday practice of shaping resilient and liveable cities and communities worldwide.

More information on the UN 17 SDGs and Sustainability Commissions is available [here](#) and [here](#).

Habitat

Council has approved the Habitat Commission (HCOM) for the 2026–2029 term: UIA's direct response to UN-Habitat's agenda and its recognition of the interconnection between the man-made built environment and its natural surroundings. HCOM asserts the right to adequate housing, to the city, and to a safe, sustainable and inclusive environment. Echoing UN-Habitat's insight that adequate housing cannot be separated from transport, water and civic connection — or it produces segregation — the Commission treats housing as inseparable from the city around it. Social Habitat, Community Architecture & Human Rights, and Informal Settlements, previously individual Work Programmes, become part of the Commission's scope of activity, formalising a horizontal axis that already existed.

Habitat is a core pillar of the profession, not an annual standalone campaign, and HCOM provides the space to explore, in greater depth, the themes related to how we inhabit space, and the synergies or pressures that this habitation brings.

BOARDS

UNESCO UIA Validation Board

The UNESCO-UIA Validation Board aims to set an international standard for excellence in architectural education, ensuring the prestige and integrity of validated schools.

The UNESCO-UIA Charter on Architectural Education, first published in 1996, lays out a series of guidelines aimed at ensuring that young architects receive an education that fully prepares them to meet the professional, social and cultural challenges of the globalised profession. The Charter acts as the basis for the UNESCO-UIA Study Programme Validation.

More information on the UNESCO UIA Validation Board is available [here](#).

ICC - International Competitions Consultancy Board



Since the 1950s, UNESCO has entrusted the UIA to supervise the application of the Standard Regulations, assist competition organisers and promote international competitions. Professional international design competitions endorsed by the UIA have taken place all over the world and have resulted in some of the most iconic buildings of the 20th century. Endorsement by the UIA is an assessment of conformity to UNESCO Regulations and the UIA best practice recommendations. It is a guarantee of fair conduct of the competition with equitable conditions for the competitors, the winner and the organiser.

The UIA provides consultancy for competitions and awards/prizes through the consultancy team of its specialised body, the International Competitions Consultancy Board.

More information on the International Competitions Consultancy Board is available [here](#).

WORK PROGRAMMES

Architecture and Children

The Architecture and Children Work Programme (AaC) aims to raise awareness among children of the built environment, architecture, urbanism and sustainable development. Fostering their knowledge in these fields will ensure their development as responsible citizens, able to make their voices heard and influence the political, economic and social strategies that will shape their cities and their environment. The future quality of our built environment will be determined by the children of today.

More information on the Architecture and Children Work Programme is available [here](#).

Architecture for All

The Architecture for All Work Programme (AfA) raises awareness of the architect's responsibility to ensure that accessibility and inclusive design are essential components of architectural design, construction and education. The programme promotes good practice in accessible and inclusive urban design and architecture.

More information on the Architecture for All Work Programme is available [here](#).

Heritage and Cultural Identity

The Heritage and Cultural Identity Work Programme (HCI) promotes methods for the conservation of architectural heritage and works to protect existing and future heritage and cultural sites from natural disasters. The Programme engages in questions of urban and sustainable development, rehabilitation, renovation and conservation of existing sites, striving to establish high international standards for good practice.

More information on the Heritage and Cultural Identity Work Programme is available [here](#).

Health and Well-Being

Council has approved the Health and Well-Being Work Programme (HWB) for the 2026–2029 term, opening the lens through which the former Public Health Work Programme addressed health issues. Where the previous Programme focused mainly on how individual buildings protect, develop and restore health, HWB extends this responsibility to urban and territorial planning. How cities are planned, built and managed determines exposure to air pollution, noise, heat and



environmental hazards, as well as access to heritage, green space, active mobility and essential services. A significant share of the global disease burden is attributable to environmental factors linked to urbanisation. HWB treats health not as a possible outcome of responsible urban development, but as a foundation and a central criterion guiding governance, planning and design.

More on the former Public Health Work Programme is available [here](#).

Indigenous Peoples

The Indigenous Peoples Work Programme (IP) aims to foster and promote the value of design and architecture based on Indigenous Knowledge. The UIA Indigenous Peoples Work Programme will provide the global architectural community with the knowledge, skills, and resources to advocate for and work in collaboration with Indigenous communities for a better world for all.

More information on the Indigenous Peoples Work Programme is available [here](#).

Natural and Human Disasters

The Natural and Human Disasters Work Programme brings together expertise in crisis management and serves as a conduit to help architects become better prepared to mobilise and assist those in need. As climate change increasingly affects our world, with the potential to exacerbate global inequalities in the distribution of wealth and resources, and as nations continue to experience internal and external conflicts, the objective of this Work Programme is to raise awareness and prepare the profession to become more engaged in disaster management.

More information on the Natural and Human Disasters Work Programme is available [here](#).

Public Facilities

Council has approved the Public Facilities Work Programme (PF) for the 2026–2029 term, a new Work Programme with its origins in the Educational and Cultural Spaces and the Sports and Leisure Work Programmes. By bringing together different programmatic typologies under the umbrella of Public Facilities, and the overarching theme of well-being, the Work Programme opens the space for synergies between two fields long shaped by the same underlying concern: how architecture serves communities, structures everyday public life, and informs the policies that govern the spaces we share.

Together, these two legacies give the Public Facilities Work Programme its shared foundation: facilities that are public and shaped by community needs.

More on the former Educational and Cultural Spaces and Sports and Leisure Work Programmes is available [here](#) and [here](#).

Sustainable Tourism

The Sustainable Tourism Work Programme aims to convene architects, planners and policymakers to explore how architecture and planning should lead the shift towards tourism that heals rather than harms, grounded in accountability, creativity, and ecological intelligence. It will look at examples of how architecture and urban planning have achieved positive outcomes in this field to inspire participants and provide a practical framework for applying these principles.

More information on the Sustainable Tourism Work Programme is available [here](#).



Urbanisation and Public Spaces

Council has approved the Urbanisation and Public Spaces Work Programme (UPS) for the 2026–2029 term, broadening the scope through which the former Public Spaces Work Programme considered these sites and areas. Rather than focusing on the study of previously neglected sites that have been renovated to provide for contemporary needs, the Urbanisation and Public Spaces Work Programme recognises that the pace and scale of urbanisation have intensified dramatically over recent decades, and responsible urbanisation recognises the importance of Public Space. Responsible Urbanisation promotes public spaces that enable social interaction, accessibility, safety, cultural expression, environmental resilience and well-being.

More information on the former Public Spaces Work Programme is available [here](#).



PARTICIPATING IN A UIA WORKING BODY

Following the reform of the UIA Working Bodies approved by the Council on 11 September 2026, Member Sections are now invited to confirm already engaged members and/or nominate new members and Co-Directors for the UIA's Commissions, Boards and Work Programmes for the 2026–2029 term. Council has approved a maximum of two terms for Co-Directors leading the same Working Body. However, this rule will apply going forward and not retroactively.

Nominees should be qualified individuals who possess expertise and interest in the specific areas covered by this term's Working Bodies, in line with the UIA Working Bodies Nominee Profiles.

Co-Directors will lead the Working Body, defining its programme of work with respect to the terms of reference of the term and in consultation with the Members. They will organise and coordinate the work and ensure that planned outcomes are delivered. They are responsible for proposing the triennial budgets and reporting regularly to the Secretary General and/or Council on their progress, when requested.

Members support the Co-Directors in implementing the Working Body programme, contributing actively to projects and tasks, and carrying out the agreed work within the established timeframe.

The President and the Secretary General shall examine the nominations, confirm the members and appoint the most appropriate nominees as Co-Directors.

The final composition of each Working Body shall reflect the principle of inclusivity, equitable regional representation and the balance between continuity and renewal among its members, ensuring appropriate expertise in the relevant areas and themes.

Nominees not having the requested experience in the relevant areas and fields may be confirmed as Correspondents to the relevant Working Body. Correspondents contribute to the Working Body by participating in specific tasks or maintaining a role as an observer, at the discretion of the Co-Directors and according to their availability. They ensure liaison between the Working Body and their respective Member Section.

Member Sections are urged to provide appropriate support to their selected nominees. This includes financial support for Co-Directors to attend in-person Working Body meetings and UIA events (Forums and Congresses), and Council meetings when their attendance is requested. Member Sections are also urged to provide financial support for the Members to attend in-person Working Body meetings.

PROFILES OF CO-DIRECTORS AND MEMBERS OF UIA WORKING BODIES

UIA's Working Bodies address matters of major importance to society and to the architectural profession on a global scale, contributing actively to UIA's mission and critical aims. Engagement with the Working Bodies is an opportunity, but also a responsibility, to actively contribute to the endeavours of the UIA, driving meaningful change and contributing to the development of knowledge and policies on matters affecting architecture, society and the public interest.

The members of the UIA Working Bodies should be highly qualified individuals from UIA Member Sections, who demonstrate relevant expertise and interest in the specific areas covered by the Working Body to which they belong.

UIA Working Body Co-Directors and Members share a common understanding of the values and ethos of the thematic area and scope of the Working Body to which they belong, as set out in existing UIA guiding documents for that specific field.

When nominating an individual to a UIA Working Body, Member Sections should consider the following:

CO-DIRECTORS AND MEMBERS OF COMMISSIONS AND WORK PROGRAMMES – NOMINEE PROFILE

When nominating an individual to the:

- Architectural Education Commission
- Professional Practice Commission
- Sustainable Cities and Communities Commission
- Habitat Commission
- Architecture and Children Work Programme
- Architecture for All Work Programme
- Heritage and Cultural Identity Work Programme
- Health and Well-Being Work Programme
- Indigenous Peoples Work Programme
- Natural and Human Disasters Work Programme
- Public Facilities Work Programme
- Sustainable Tourism Work Programme
- Urbanisation and Public Spaces Work Programme

UIA Member Sections should consider the following:

1. Professional Experience and general skills

Nominees must be architects with the right to practise the profession in their home country and demonstrate a proven track record in the specific areas of expertise and matters addressed by the relevant Working Body. Prior experience in professional organisations or similar umbrella organisations in the field of architecture, and in working with volunteer experts will be valued.

Nominees should demonstrate commitment to the work of their Working Body and, ideally, possess the following:

- Understanding of international contexts and challenges;



- Experience in participating in or contributing to initiatives, projects or activities related to the specific area of expertise addressed by the relevant Working Body;
- Ability to maintain effective working relations in a multicultural environment and to work collaboratively to achieve organisational goals;
- Fluency in spoken and written English enabling effective communication and collaborative work;
- Good communication skills (oral and written) and the ability to draft documentation and communicate complex information clearly and concisely;
- Motivation and time availability to contribute actively to the work of the UIA throughout the triennium.

2. Specific skills

The following specific skills will be valued:

- Good knowledge of UIA's mission and aims, as well as the functioning of its Bodies;
- Knowledge of relevant experts, institutions or networks within the nominee's own Region and abroad, that are dedicated either to the area of expertise of the relevant Working Body or to complementary areas.

3. General duties of the Members of a UIA Working Body

Besides supporting the Co-Directors in implementing the Working Body programme, contributing actively to projects and tasks, and carrying out the agreed work within the established timeframe, members of a UIA Working Body have the following general duties:

- Be familiar with and informed about UIA guidelines and policies concerning the area of expertise of the relevant Working Body;
- Participate actively in the work of the Working Body, respond to the Co-Directors in a timely manner and perform other activities related to its successful operation;
- Respond to fellow Members and UIA staff in a professional, constructive and timely manner;
- Use personal and professional skills, relationships and knowledge to support and promote UIA-endorsed work in the specific area of expertise of the Working Body.

4. General duties of the Co-Directors of a UIA Working Body

Besides leading the Working Body, defining its programme of work with respect to the terms of reference of the term and in consultation with the Members; organising and coordinating the work of the Members, proposing the triennial budgets and reporting regularly to the Secretary General on the progress of the Working Body, Co-Directors of a UIA Working Body have the following general duties:

- Be familiar with and informed about UIA guidelines and policies concerning the area of expertise of the relevant Working Body;
- Lead the Members of the Working Body with an impact-driven and result-oriented approach;
- Direct the work engaging all the Working Body Members and ensuring the successful operation of the Working Body, according to the terms of reference and priorities set out for the term;
- Respond to the President and Secretary General, UIA staff and Members of the Working Body in a professional, constructive and timely manner;



- Use personal and professional skills, relationships and knowledge to support and promote UIA-endorsed work in the specific area of expertise of the Working Body.

5. Time commitment

Appointed nominees shall serve a three-year term on the Working Body as an active Member or Co-Director, attending scheduled meetings of the Working Body and participating in related events, namely UIA's Forums and Congresses.

Nominees without the requisite experience in the relevant field may instead be confirmed as Correspondents, contributing to specific tasks or maintaining a role as observer, at the discretion of the Co-Directors and according to their availability.

CO-DIRECTORS AND MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS CONSULTANCY BOARD (ICC) – NOMINEE PROFILE

The Consultancy Board differs in nature from other Working Bodies. ICC Co-Directors are responsible for providing consultancy aimed at organising architectural competitions, awards or selection procedures. In the case of external organisers, a fee is charged for UIA consultancy and endorsement. As the service provider, the UIA must provide the best possible advisory consultancy.

When nominating an individual to the International Competitions Consultancy Board, Member Sections should consider the following:

1. Values and ethos of architectural competitions

ICC members share a common understanding of the values and ethos of architectural competitions, as set out in the [UIA Competition Guide and UNESCO “Standard Regulations for International Competitions in Architecture and Town-Planning”](#).

2. General skills

Nominees must be architects with the right to practise the profession in their home country and have a minimum of five years' experience as an architect, or a minimum of five years' experience as a university academic in architecture. They should have a proven track record in architectural design competitions, either as competitors or as organisers (client), jury member, jury secretary or expert within a professional organisation.

Experience of working on a competition committee or a similar body dealing with architectural design competitions within a national professional organisation will be highly valued.

Nominees should demonstrate commitment to the work of the ICC and ideally possess the following:

- Understanding of international contexts and challenges;
- Understanding of the role of Architectural Design Competitions in professional practice;
- Ability to maintain effective working relations in a multicultural environment and to work collaboratively to achieve organisational goals;
- Fluency in spoken and written English enabling effective communication and collaborative work;



- Good communication skills (oral and written) and the ability to draft documentation and communicate complex information clearly and concisely;
- Motivation and time availability to contribute actively to the work of the UIA throughout the triennium.

3. Specific skills

The following specific skills will be valued:

- Good knowledge of UIA's mission and aims, as well as the functioning of its Bodies;
- Marketing ability and communication skills;
- Knowledge of national-level advocacy and public procurement frameworks;
- Knowledge of potential jury members within the nominee's own Region and abroad;
- Knowledge of relevant experts, institutions or networks within the nominee's own Region and abroad, that are dedicated to Architectural Design Competitions.

4. General duties of the Members of the ICC

Besides supporting the Co-Directors in implementing the Board's programme, contributing actively to projects and tasks, and carrying out the agreed work within the established timeframe, members of the ICC have the following general duties:

- Be familiar with and informed about UIA guidelines and policies concerning Architectural Design Competitions and Awards;
- Participate actively in the work of the ICC, respond to the Co-Directors in a timely manner and perform other activities related to the successful operation of the Board;
- Participate in online and in-person meetings when requested by the Co-Directors;
- Respond to fellow ICC Members and UIA staff in a professional, constructive and timely manner;
- Use personal and professional skills, relationships and knowledge to support and promote UIA-endorsed Architectural Design Competitions and Awards.

5. General duties of the Co-Directors of the ICC

Besides leading the ICC, defining its programme of work with respect to the terms of reference of the term and in consultation with the Members; organising and coordinating the work of the Members, proposing the triennial budgets and reporting regularly to the Secretary General on the progress of the Board, Co-Directors of the ICC have the following general duties:

- Be familiar with and informed about UIA guidelines and policies concerning Architectural Design Competitions and Awards;
- Meet and advise external and UIA organisers of competitions and awards;
- Lead the Members of the ICC with an impact-driven and result-oriented approach;
- Direct the work engaging all the ICC Members and ensuring the successful operation of the Board, according to the terms of reference and priorities set out for the term;
- Respond to the President and Secretary General, UIA staff and Members of the ICC in a professional, constructive and timely manner;
- Use personal and professional skills, relationships and knowledge to support and promote UIA-endorsed Architectural Design Competitions and Awards.
- Participate in Council meetings, when requested;



- Serving as a Co-Director may require a significant time commitment and the ability to provide service on short notice.

6. Time commitment

Appointed nominees shall serve a three-year term on the Working Body as an active Member or Co-Director, attending scheduled meetings of the Working Body and participating in related events, namely UIA's Forums and Congresses, when requested.

Nominees without the requisite experience in Architectural Design Competitions may instead be confirmed as Correspondents, contributing to specific tasks or maintaining a role as observer, at the discretion of the Co-Directors and according to their availability.

CO-DIRECTORS AND MEMBERS OF THE UNESCO-UIA VALIDATION BOARD (UNESCO-UIA VB) – NOMINEE PROFILE

When nominating an individual to the UNESCO-UIA Validation Board, Member Sections should consider the following:

1. Values and ethos of architectural education

UNESCO-UIA VB members share a common understanding of the values and ethos of architectural education, as set out in the [UNESCO-UIA Charter for Architectural Education](#).

2. General skills

Nominees must be architects with the right to practise the profession in their home country and have a minimum of five years' experience as an architect, or a minimum of five years' experience as a university academic in architecture. Nominees must have a proven track record and knowledge of contemporary adult teaching and learning principles and practices, including curriculum design and implementation, and assessment methodology and moderation.

Experience of working on a committee or a similar body dealing with accreditation within a national professional organisation will be highly valued.

Nominees should demonstrate commitment to the work of the UNESCO-UIA VB and ideally possess the following:

- Understanding of international contexts and challenges;
- Understanding of the role of validation/accreditation and of validation/accreditation bodies;
- Understanding of either the contemporary higher education environment (if a practising architect) or architectural practice (if an academic);
- Ability to maintain effective working relations in a multicultural environment and to work collaboratively to achieve organisational goals;
- Fluency in spoken and written English enabling effective communication and collaborative work;
- Good communication skills (oral and written) and the ability to draft documentation and communicate complex information clearly and concisely;



- Motivation and time availability to contribute actively to the work of the UIA throughout the triennium.

3. Specific skills

The following specific skills will be valued:

- Good knowledge of UIA's mission and aims, as well as the functioning of its Bodies;
- Marketing ability and communication skills;
- Knowledge of relevant experts, institutions or networks within the nominee's own Region and abroad, that are dedicated to validation/accreditation.

4. General duties of the Members of the UNESCO-UIA VB

Besides supporting the Co-Directors in implementing the Validation Board's programme, contributing actively to projects and tasks, and carrying out the agreed work within the established timeframe, members of the VB have the following general duties:

- Be familiar with and informed about UIA guidelines and policies concerning Architectural Education and the UNESCO-UIA Validation Procedure;
- Participate actively in the work of the UNESCO-UIA VB, responding to the Co-Directors in a timely manner and performing other activities related to the successful operation of the Board;
- Respond to fellow UNESCO-UIA VB Members and UIA staff in a professional, constructive and timely manner;
- Use personal and professional skills, relationships and knowledge to support and promote the UNESCO-UIA Validation Procedure.

5. General duties of the Co-Directors of the UNESCO-UIA VB

Besides leading the UNESCO-UIA VB, defining its programme of work with respect to the terms of reference of the term and in consultation with the Members; organising and coordinating the work of the Members, proposing the triennial budgets and reporting regularly to the Secretary General on the progress of the Board, Co-Directors of the UNESCO-UIA VB have the following general duties:

- Be familiar with and informed about UIA guidelines and policies concerning Architectural Education and the UNESCO-UIA Validation Programme;
- Lead the Members of the UNESCO-UIA VB with an impact-driven and result-oriented approach;
- Direct the work engaging all the UNESCO-UIA VB Members and ensuring the successful operation of the Board, according to the terms of reference and priorities set out for the term;
- Respond to the President and Secretary General, UIA staff and Members of the UNESCO-UIA VB in a professional, constructive and timely manner;
- Use personal and professional skills, relationships and knowledge to support and promote the UNESCO-UIA Validation Programme.



6. Time commitment

Appointed nominees shall serve a three-year term on the Working Body as an active Member or Co-Director, attending scheduled meetings of the Working Body and participating in related events, namely UIA's Forums and Congresses.

Nominees without the requisite experience in architectural education may instead be confirmed as Correspondents, contributing to specific tasks or maintaining a role as observer, at the discretion of the Co-Directors and according to their availability.