

ARCHITECTURE STUDENT CONTEST 2026

India edition under
Transparence 20.0

BELGRADE, SERBIA

REGISTER NOW

ABOUT SAINT-GOBAIN

Saint-Gobain designs, manufactures, and distributes materials and services for the construction and industrial markets. These solutions are found everywhere in our living spaces and our daily life: in buildings, transportation, infrastructure, and in many industrial applications. They provide comfort, performance, and sustainability while meeting the challenges of the decarbonization of the world of construction and industry, the preservation of resources, and rapid urbanization.

In India, Saint-Gobain, as part of its Glass Business, manufactures a variety of float glass products and offers solutions that continue to shape the Indian construction industry. The company produces a wide range of float glass products - Clear Glass, Tinted Glass, Mirrors, Lacquered Glass, Energy Efficient Performance Glass, and Glass for High-performance applications, including Fire Safety. With over 20 years of presence in India, and a unique pan-India manufacturing footprint with plants in Bhiwadi (Rajasthan), Jhagadia (Gujarat), and Sriperumbudur (Tamil Nadu).

In a constantly changing world, Saint-Gobain is already committed to an approach that embraces both innovation and sustainability in readiness to grow, at the same time as taking care to grow responsibly. Growth at Saint-Gobain is guided by the purpose, 'Making the World a Better Home', which responds to the shared ambition of all men and women of the Group to act every day and make the world a more beautiful and sustainable place to live in.

For more details, visit: www.in.saint-gobain-glass.com

ABOUT ETHOS EMPOWERS

Ethos Empowers is a bridge that creates avenues of engagement for the ACED community that help unite and facilitate an environment of collective learning and growth. Ethos connects its vast reach and understanding amongst the architecture, construction, engineering, and design community to bring about value exchange.

Gita Balakrishnan started Ethos in 2002, as a response to a need for raising awareness about our built environment. Ethos is an initiative to bridge the gap between professionals, academicians, students and industries in the ACED community (Architecture, Construction, Engineering and Design) and is an engaging and empowering platform for young professionals who are to be decision-makers in the years to come.

To know more, log on to www.ethosempowers.com



Architecture Student Contest 2026

The Architecture Student Contest (ASC) is Saint-Gobain's prestigious international competition for students of architecture, design, and construction engineering.

With a legacy of over 20 years—held annually since 2004—the contest presents a real-world, comprehensive design challenge that aligns with Saint-Gobain's vision for better living and sustainable construction. Rooted in principles of environmental responsibility and innovation, the brief encourages students to propose future-ready buildings that embody the ideals of sustainability, comfort, and performance.

The competition follows a two-stage format: participants first compete at the **National Stage**, and the **winning team from each country earns the opportunity to present their project at the International Stage**, where they compete with participants from 30 countries representing their nation on a global platform.

Beyond a Landmark: Redefine the Riverfront of Belgrade, Serbia

Welcome to the Architecture Student Contest (ASC) 2026, an exciting opportunity for architecture and interior design students across India to design for a real city with a rich historical, cultural, and urban landscape — **Belgrade, the capital of Serbia**.

About Belgrade

Belgrade, known locally as Beograd, is a vibrant European capital with a population of approximately 1.7 million. Nestled at the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers, the city is marked by its unique spirit, shaped by thousands of years of history, diverse cultures, and dynamic growth.

A City of Deep History

Belgrade's story traces back to the Vinča civilization, one of the oldest cultures in the world, evolving as early as the 6th millennium BC. The city's strategic river location made it a key settlement for the Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman, and Austro-Hungarian empires. The Kalemegdan Fortress stands today as a living testament to Belgrade's complex, layered past.

Belgrade Today

A major contributor to Serbia's economy, Belgrade generates nearly 40% of the national GDP and is one of Europe's fastest-developing urban centers. Its diverse population, multi-religious fabric, and deep-rooted sports culture reflect a city full of resilience and modern energy. Belgrade is also the hometown of international sporting icons like Novak Djokovic and Nikola Jokic, symbolizing its enduring spirit.

The City's Geography and Climate

Belgrade offers a varied topography, from the fertile Pannonian Plain to low-lying hills and swamplands that transformed into thriving neighborhoods like New Belgrade. The city experiences a mild continental climate, with hot summers and cold winters. A distinct feature is the košava wind, which often sweeps through the city, bringing clear skies and fresh air.



Architecture and Urban Vision

Belgrade's architectural landscape is a blend of historic and modern structures — from the iconic Temple of St. Sava and Kalemegdan Fortress to the rationalist blocks of New Belgrade. Today, the city is undergoing a bold urban transformation, focusing on riverfront redevelopment, sustainable growth, improved public spaces, and a more connected city through the upcoming Belgrade Subway and EXPO 2027 initiatives.

Belgrade for the Future

With one of Europe's most ambitious master plans, Belgrade aims to:

- Host a growing population and new businesses
- Revitalize urban spaces
- Reclaim the waterfront for the public
- Promote sustainable mobility and environmental efficiency

The city presents an inspiring context for reimagining architecture and public spaces for better living. Through this competition, you will explore how to design for a city that honors its past while actively building its future.

As part of the 2026 edition of the Architecture Student Contest, students are invited to take on a bold and forward-looking challenge: **transforming a key section of Belgrade's Sava riverfront into a dynamic Sports and Recreation Hub.**

Organized by Saint-Gobain in close collaboration with the City of Belgrade, the Academic Yachting Club Belgrade, Green & Blue Corridors Association, and the Serbia Green Building Council, this competition offers a rare opportunity to work on a **real site with powerful potential for urban change.**

The site, located near the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers and adjacent to iconic landmarks like the Kalemegdan Fortress and the Belgrade Waterfront, is currently occupied by a former **cement factory**. The task is to **revitalize this industrial area and seamlessly integrate the existing Academic Yachting Club Belgrade into a vibrant, sustainable public space.**

This is not just a design exercise—it's a call to envision the waterfront as a catalyst for urban regeneration. Students must propose **thoughtful, innovative ideas** that balance new construction with adaptive reuse, while incorporating diverse public and commercial spaces rooted in sports, ecology, hospitality, and community engagement.

Are you ready to reimagine Belgrade's riverfront, shape the future of urban living, and represent India on a global stage?

DOWNLOAD ANNEXURE A



Design Task

A Strategic Site at the Confluence

The 2026 Architecture Student Contest challenges participants to design a Sports and Recreation Hub in Belgrade, Serbia, transforming a historically industrial site along the Sava River into a vibrant public-oriented development. The total site spans approximately 120,000 m², currently occupied by a former cement plant, bordered by a major road (Brodarska), bus stations, and a railway crossing the river.



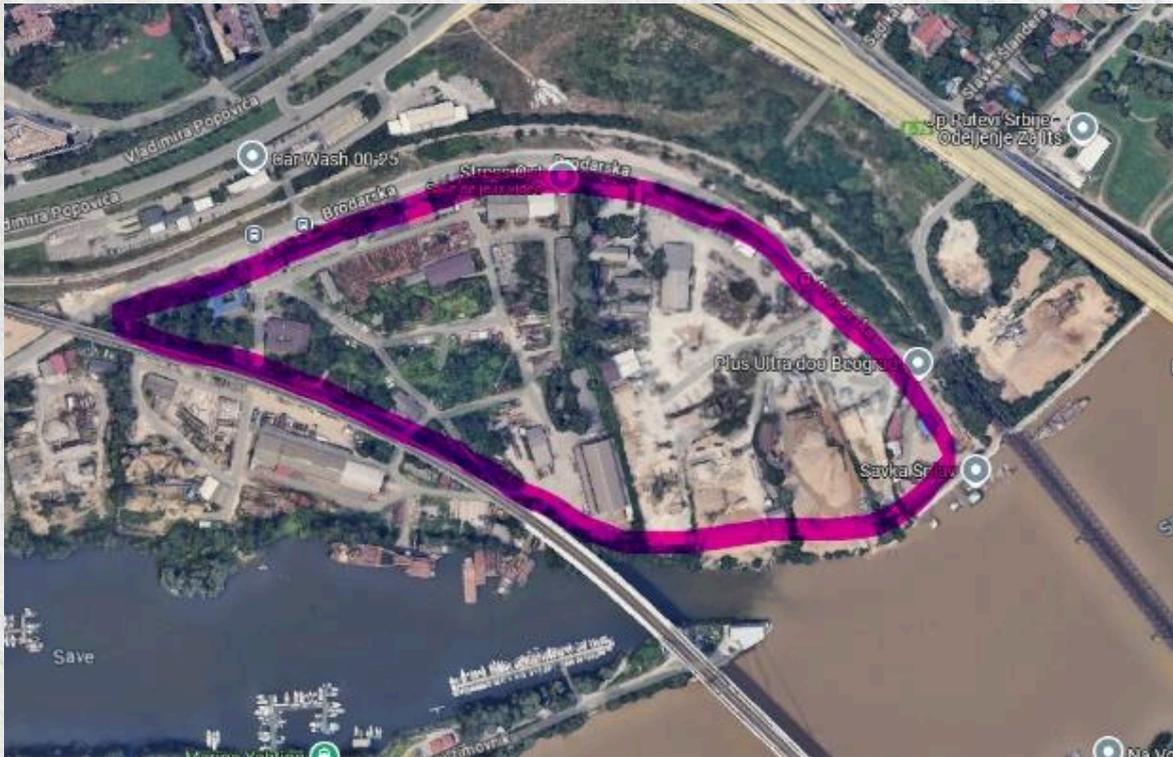
Location of Site for the Design Contest

Three-Part Design Challenge

The project involves a multi-layered brief composed of three key components:

- 1. Athlete Accommodation (New Construction):** Students must design a mixed-use residential complex for athletes and visitors, including facilities such as a cafeteria, changing rooms, and training spaces. This must be a fully developed part of the proposal and will be a primary focus of the competition evaluation.
- 2. Renovation of the Academic Yachting Club Belgrade (AYK):** Located on a narrow, elongated peninsula between the Sava River and an inner backwater channel, the AYK is Serbia's oldest sailing club, active since 1934. The task involves enhancing its functionality and accessibility, integrating modern amenities while respecting its architectural identity. Proposals should foster public engagement and reinforce the club's connection to the river.
- 3. Conceptual Design for the Remaining Area:** Students are encouraged to propose volumetric and open space designs for complementary functions, such as water sports facilities, outdoor courts, sports museums, cafés, retail spaces, and public parks. These elements should support year-round activity and contribute to Belgrade's sustainability and recreation goals.





The plot for New Building

Connectivity and Integration

The site's development must enhance pedestrian and cyclist movement along the waterfront, incorporating strategies like a movable pedestrian bridge to connect the marina with the rest of the site. Connectivity with public transport and integration with the urban fabric is crucial. Additionally, students should consider the tide and seasonal changes of the river while planning. The reuse of the former cement plant site and surrounding infrastructure is seen as a catalyst for ecological restoration, with emphasis on maximizing green cover, afforestation, and sustainable land use. Proposals should create a cohesive relationship between new and existing programs, enhancing environmental performance while inviting community interaction.

Urban and Environmental Challenges

This design task requires students to address complex and often conflicting priorities:

- Balancing residential, recreational, and commercial functions
- Addressing the site's industrial past and associated environmental concerns
- Working within the limitations of the AYK building while introducing upgrades
- Navigating the spatial constraints of the peninsula and preserving natural habitats
- Designing spaces that remain active, inclusive, and accessible year-round

This is not just a design project—it's a chance to influence the future of a real European city. Your proposals will reflect how architecture can regenerate urban land, strengthen cultural identity, and promote sustainability in a changing world.

[DOWNLOAD ANNEXURE B](#)



Technical Parameters

The technical parameters for this project are guided by **Saint-Gobain's Sustainable Construction Guidelines**, which focus on contributing to a better planet and a better quality of life for people. These guidelines aim to reduce environmental impact through energy efficiency, resource circularity, and enhanced comfort and health for occupants and installers.

These include:

- Sustainability: Better for the Planet and People
- Thermal Comfort
- Indoor Air Quality
- Acoustic Comfort
- Fire Safety
- Natural Daylight
- Carbon Emissions & Energy Consumption
- Resources & Circularity

[DOWNLOAD ANNEXURE C](#)

Eligibility and Teams

- All Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students of Architecture and Design in India and those graduating in 2025 and/or 2026 can register under this section.
- Participation is allowed in teams of up to three members, provided all members are eligible for the same sub-category.
- Students are allowed to make teams across different academic years (in the same sub-category) and different colleges.

Participants may choose to involve a faculty member or mentor from their college to guide them during the design process. Mentorship is encouraged to enhance the learning experience.

To register for Saint-Gobain Transparency 20.0, please visit www.transparence.in. Remember to register under the ASC category.

Competition Format

It is a two-stage competition:

- **National Level:** Participants must register and compete at the Indian level first. A winning team will be selected from all submissions in the ASC category. This team will go on to represent both their college and Team India on the international stage.
- **International Level:** National winners from over 30 countries will come together to compete in the final round, which will be held in Serbia in 2026. Participation at this stage will be fully sponsored by Saint-Gobain, offering students a unique opportunity to showcase their work globally.

Important: Please do not register directly on the Architecture Student Contest (ASC) website, as it may lead to disqualification from the competition.



Evaluation Criteria

There are various aspects that are key and unique to the Architecture Student Contest.

- The first aspect is that the Contest Task addresses two building proposals: a new building and the renovation of an existing building within a plot provided by the local partners.
- The second aspect is the sustainability considerations.
- Lastly, the respect of minimum requirements, correct usage of Saint-Gobain products and solutions in the project, and the quality and consistency of the proposed construction details with regard to building physics.

Tackling these aspects is important and will be considered by the jury during the National stage and to pass to the international stage, under the criteria below:

Component	Architecture	Sustainable Construction	Total Weightage
New Construction	30%	30%	60%
Renovation	20%	20%	40%

Criteria

- Design excellence that considers local identity and cultural context.
- Efficient functional concept that responds to program needs, providing clear building information.
- Provides a master plan with connections of buildings to the exterior public spaces and nearby buildings.
- Design clearly addresses sustainability criteria: passive design, carbon & energy, resources & circularity, and health & wellbeing.
- Shows quality in several construction details concerning building physics (thermal and acoustic bridges, airtightness, and moisture management).
- Correct usage and mentioning of Saint-Gobain products and solutions in the project.

The jury will look for projects that not only display creativity and technical expertise but also demonstrate a strong commitment to sustainability and social responsibility. Careful attention to both design detailing and long-term performance will be key in selecting the winning proposals.



Submission Format

- Submission will be completely ONLINE. Plan your content and graphics to be viewed accordingly.
- The submission link will be provided in the confirmation email sent after successful registration.
- Your submission should be a single PDF file (max 20 MB, max 12 A3 landscape sheets) that includes the following:
 - **Concept Statement**
 - Tell us your big idea! What is the story behind your design? What problem are you solving?
 - How does your proposal improve life for people who'll use the space?
 - **Master Plan**
 - Show the site layout, highlight zones, connections, user movement, and surrounding context.
 - Add sketches, diagrams, or 3D views to help us understand your design approach.
 - **Building A - Renovation**
 - Prepare a draft-level architectural proposal that responds to the new program or function you're assigning to the renovated building.
 - Include essential architectural drawings like floor plans, elevations, and key sections that clearly explain your design approach.
 - Add a short write-up explaining the design choices and the renovation strategies you've used. Focus especially on technical solutions tailored to the building's existing conditions.
 - Support your proposal with a few high-quality 3D views or visualizations to help us better understand the spatial experience.
 - **Building B - New Construction for Residential Function in Campus Location**
 - Submit a draft proposal for your new residential building concept located within a campus setting.
 - Include key architectural drawings such as floor plans, elevations, and essential sections to explain your design clearly. Use a readable scale that helps convey your idea well.
 - Add 3D views of your proposal to help us visualize the spatial experience and how it fits within the surrounding campus context.
 - Do a Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) at the building level using a reliable tool like One Click LCA. (If you're using SketchUp, you can try the Saint-Gobain-developed plugin 'SAVE-LCA'.)
 - Share any energy efficiency calculations, which can be done using simulation tools. These should show how your design is responding to climate and sustainability concerns.
 - **Video Presentation**

As part of your entry, submit a short video (5 minutes) presenting your design. It's your chance to share your concept, process, and presentation skills, helping the jury understand not just what you designed, but why.

 - Intro: Briefly introduce yourself/your team and state your design intent and site
 - Concept + Site: What inspired your idea? How does it respond to the site's climate, context, or people?
 - Design Highlights: Walk us through the key plans, sections, 3D views, unique features, material choices, and sustainability strategies. For renovations: what's changed and why?
 - Wrap-up: Leave us with one strong takeaway: what change are you hoping your design will inspire? End with how your design impacts the community and the future.
 - Be creative — use visuals, narration, even on-site clips if relevant — as long as your idea shines through clearly.
 - **Mentioning your name, college, or any other identification in your sheets will be grounds for DISQUALIFICATION.**



Awards:

The **winner of the National ASC category** will get a fully sponsored opportunity by Saint-Gobain to represent India at the international event in Belgrade, Serbia. **They'll compete with participants from over 30 countries** for a chance to win exciting global prizes!

National Awards:

- **National Winner:** Winning Trophy, and a certificate
- All Participants will receive a **“Certificate of Participation”**

International Awards:

- **1st Prize** - € 5000 + Award Certificate signed by the International Jury members
- **2nd Prize** - € 3000 + Award Certificate signed by the International Jury members
- **3rd Prize** - € 1500 + Award Certificate signed by the International Jury members
- **Teachers Prize** - € 1000 + Award Certificate signed by the International Jury members. This prize is awarded to the project that receives the most votes from the teachers at the International Stage.
- **Student Prize** - € 1000 + Award Certificate signed by the International Jury members. This prize is awarded to the project that receives the most votes from the students at the International Stage.

Competition Timeline

Registrations Open: 2 June 2025

Registrations Close: 31 October 2025

Submissions Close: 4 November 2025

Announcement of Shortlists: By mid-November 2025

Finale and Awards: 5 December 2025

Other Categories:

1. Architecture

Open to students and teams looking to design iconic public buildings with the potential to shape the identity of India—sustainable, iconic, and future-ready architecture with global impact.

2. Interior Design Category

For students who want to reimagine and redefine iconic interior spaces through innovative, functional, and future-forward design interventions. This track focuses on spatial experience, materiality, and human-centered design within enclosed spaces.

To know more and explore all categories, visit: www.transparence.in



Competition Resources

- Contest Task [here](#)
- Contest Task Presentation video [here](#)
- 360° video [here](#)
- Contest Resources [here](#)
 1. Bicycle Infrastructure Belgrade
 2. Site Plans and Zoning
 3. Weather File
- ASC Annexure A (City and Context) [here](#)
- ASC Annexure B (Site & Task Information) [here](#)
- ASC Annexure C (Technical Parameters) [here](#)

Bonus Learning Opportunity

As a token of appreciation for participating in Transparence 20.0, we're excited to offer you free access to an **exclusive online course by Acedge**:

Designing with Glass

Discover how to integrate glass meaningfully into architecture and interior spaces with this insightful course.

Learn through real-world case studies, expert perspectives, and innovations in sustainable design — powered by Saint-Gobain.

Start learning here: <https://www.acedge.in/courses/designing-glass>

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