

# frontiers

URBANSOS  
AN OPEN IDEAS STUDENT COMPETITION

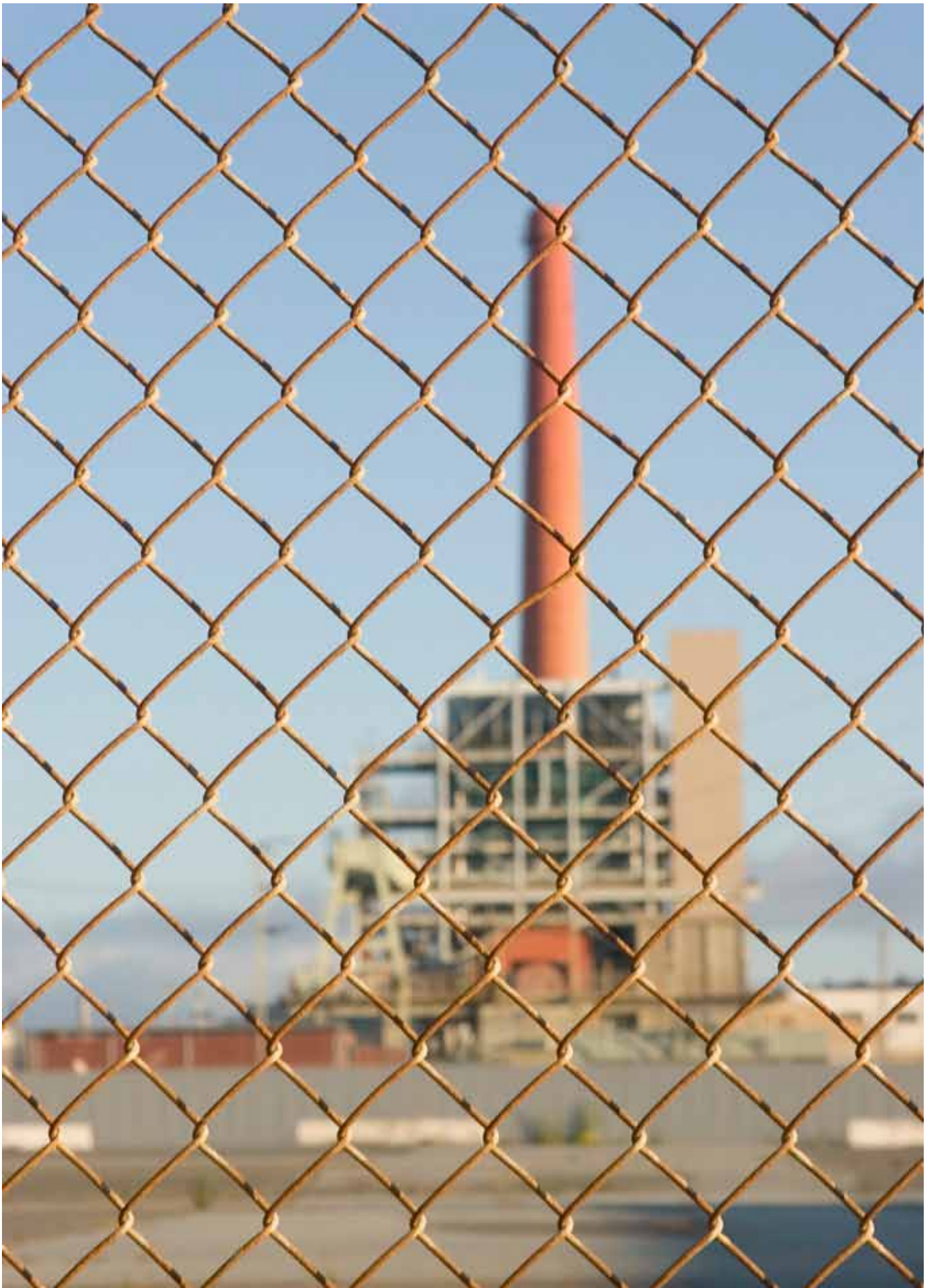
## Competition brief

Submission deadline  
August 31, 2012

Apply online  
[aecom.com/urbansos](http://aecom.com/urbansos)

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# Why?

Urban SOS is AECOM's annual student competition. It was created to engage students in urban planning and design, architecture, landscape architecture, environmental restoration, and engineering with the issues confronting modern cities and to allow them to propose solutions that, if worthy, will be seen by established professionals in their field.

With more than half of the growing world population living in cities, how we address urban and natural landscapes will determine much about the future of our planet. As a global design and engineering consultancy, AECOM recognizes that cities require broad-based, interdisciplinary thinking and, if properly managed, can become machines for environmental and social progress. Our aspiration for the competition is to foster a cross-disciplinary approach to the complex challenges facing today's built and natural environments.

The 2012 competition culminates with an event at the end of November in Shanghai. This year, we are addressing the issue of Frontiers as the driving theme of the Urban SOS competition. Our globalizing world is currently undergoing mass migrations, geo-political shifts and new patterns of commerce, enhancing the role of cities as the stage sets for these massive changes. In addition to a cash prize for the winning team, we will arrange a donation to a charitable, humanitarian or community organization to further develop the winning scheme.



Shanghai, China

# What?

AECOM is seeking submissions for our fourth annual Urban SOS competition. The theme of this year's competition is Frontiers. We are seeking integrated design, planning, environmental restoration and engineering proposals in urban contexts worldwide, which relate to border, gateway and edge/fringe conditions. Proposals should be on urban sites currently facing chronic liveability challenges that are largely the result of a city's location on a natural, political, cultural or economic border. Proposals should be implementable in the short-term, as we will engage a local organization to help advance the proposed project. Submitted proposals must fall under one or more of the following criteria:

## **On a political border:**

Challenged sites within cities that lie on an international, territorial or jurisdictional boundary where the border conditions are (at least in part) responsible for the site's existing conditions.

## **Ports and trade:**

Urban sites that are impacted or largely defined by trade and commerce that crosses national borders or communities.

## **Migration and population shifts:**

Urban communities and sites that are impacted by the mass movement of people, either as migrants across a jurisdictional border, or from a rural context to an urban one.

## **Transnational destinations:**

A site that acts as a gateway or first point-of-entry for international travellers and/or migrants, or the flow of goods and ideas from elsewhere in the world.

## **Shifting geo-political conditions:**

An urban community or site that is subject to a changing or an evolving political landscape. This transformation should be impacting either a place's relationship to its neighbors or its wider national home, its existing cultural affiliations, or recent or anticipated changes in the city's political status.

Responses can range from a strategic framework to a surgical micro-response, from a whole landscape system to a single piece of architecture. Entrants should demonstrate a holistic and sustainable approach to their proposals. They should present a connective language that can embrace many or all aspects of the site, expressing a language of built form that ties together land, buildings, ecology, infrastructure and economic and social activity. Judges will value creativity and innovation, but your response must be fundamentally feasible.

**Responses will be judged based on these criteria:**

- Response directly addresses the challenges posed by gateway or border conditions in an urban context
- Clear strategy for how proposal will affect larger city’s transformative state
- Clear sense of how proposed design will affect transformation of site
- Holistic approach to design that fully embraces site
- Appreciation for interdisciplinary thinking beyond traditional practice
- Creativity and innovation
- Feasibility and viability
- Ability to communicate ideas in a clear, interesting and compelling manner

The most successful responses will be those that are well presented, combining the points of view of more than one discipline — architecture, landscape architecture, engineering, economics, planning, ecological restoration, climate science — and are realistically implementable in the context of city-specific physical, political, social, economic and cultural realities.

**Engagement with a community organization — winning team**

In making their submissions to the Urban SOS: Frontiers competition, teams are encouraged to consider partner groups that could benefit from their proposal. These partner groups should be a humanitarian, charitable or community organization or agency, a related research institution, or a local action group that would be in a position to further develop or implement the design. The winning design will receive an AECOM donation of US\$25,000 in cash and in-kind staff time to further develop and implement the project. Likely partnership scenarios could be, but are not necessarily limited to:

- A humanitarian charity that could match the donation to making the proposal a reality;
- A local community organization prepared to jump start the project;
- A relief agency (public, intergovernmental or NGO) that could use the project to deliver services to people, places or communities in need;
- A non-profit entity (e.g., a school, hospital or other public amenity) that would directly benefit from the project’s implementation.

Furthermore, an additional US\$15,000 cash prize will be awarded to the winning team.



Above: Dubai, United Arab Emirates  
Below: Guangzhou, China

# Who?

The competition is open to undergraduate and graduate students at all levels of higher education in all countries of the world. Entrants must be enrolled in a certified program during the 2012 fall term.

- Levels: Bachelors, Masters, Ph.D. students.
- Fields of Study: Urban and Regional Planning, Urban Design, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Environmental Planning, Natural Resource Sciences, Engineering, and related disciplines.

Submissions may be from individuals or teams of up to four members. Teams will benefit from having members of multiple disciplines.

This year, we are encouraging entries from students concentrating in departments such as anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, international development, sustainable economics and the broader social sciences.



Above: Dubai, United Arab Emirates  
Below: Port Botany, New South Wales

# Where?

All sites must be urban; that is, in, of, or pertaining to human settlement, whether formal or informal.

They may be at the center of a city or at its fringes, and in all locations that may exist between these conditions.

Sites must be real places and geographically identified with a Google Earth or Google Maps reference.

Site selection is open to any country or territory in the world.



Above: Manchester, United Kingdom  
Below: Mumbai, India

# When?

## **April 16, 2012**

Registration and submission period open

## **By August 31, 2012**

Pre-registration of interest deadline at [aecom.com/urbansos](http://aecom.com/urbansos)

## **By August 31, 2012**

Final submission deadline at [aecom.com/urbansos](http://aecom.com/urbansos)

## **September**

Judging process

## **October 1, 2012**

Announcement of semi-finalists

## **Week of November 12, 2012**

Presentation and critique of semi-finalists' submissions in Shanghai



Mumbai, India

# How?

## Submission Requirements

All applicants must pre-register their interest at [aecom.com/urbansos](http://aecom.com/urbansos) by leaving a contact e-mail address. They may do so at any time until the competition deadline of August 31, 2012, but must do so before submitting their final entry. Once you have pre-registered, you will be the first to hear about any news/updates. It is recommended that you register your interest before July 1, 2012.

Due by midnight GMT on August 31, 2012, entrants must submit:

- A brief description (100-250 words) of their proposal. This statement must clearly identify the name of the city and a challenge or solution that is related to the competition theme.
- The name(s) and contact information of the team members.
- Site coordinates (via Google Earth) of the location, or an address that is searchable on Google maps.
- A PDF slide presentation of up to 10 slides. These must include images and/or text. There is no word limit but font size must be legible when printed at A4 paper size. All responses must be in English, with any measurements provided in metric units.

- Optional: Student teams are not required to identify a charitable, humanitarian, community or non-profit partner group, but if they have one pre-identified they may specify one.

Entrants are encouraged to focus their submissions on clear, concise communication emphasizing main ideas, key points and visible design solutions. Students may include photographs, diagrams, drawings, renderings, collages or other visualizations to express their solution.

Slide presentations must be in Adobe Acrobat PDF format. Each file must be no larger than 5MB. They must be A4 paper size and landscape orientation.

Submissions must be uploaded using the submission link on this website by midnight GMT on August 31, 2012. Entrants will receive a confirmation that the files have been uploaded. (Please retain confirmation for reference.)

Failure to comply with any of these submission requirements will result in immediate disqualification.

## Semi-finalists' Submission Requirements

Three semi-finalist teams will be selected. They will be notified by October 1, 2012 and given a period of time to develop their proposals further. During the week of November 12, 2012, they will be invited to present their submissions to the final judging panel in Shanghai. They will be hosted by AECOM's Shanghai office. The final schemes will be presented at an exhibit in a to-be-determined cultural venue in Shanghai.

Each of these three teams will be provided with an honorarium to contribute to travel costs (amount varies depending on location of entrants). The semi-finalists will be invited to present their submissions in an appropriate format (presentation, video, display boards, model) to the judging panel. Further details on submission requirements will be provided to the three semi-finalist teams.

# Competition terms

## Registration

All registration takes place on a dedicated website: [aecom.com/urbansos](http://aecom.com/urbansos)

Registration requires submission of an online form, which includes identification of team members, site selection, and rationale and submission of a site plan. Full details can be found in the 'How' section.

## Entry Fee

There is no entry fee for entering AECOM's student competition.

## Eligibility

The competition is open to undergraduate and graduate students at all levels of higher education in all countries of the world. Entrants must be enrolled in a certified program during the 2012 fall term.

Submissions may be from individuals or teams of up to four members.

## Schedule + Deadlines

April 16, 2012

Registration and submission period open

By August 31, 2012

Pre-registration of interest deadline at [aecom.com/urbansos](http://aecom.com/urbansos)

By August 31, 2012

Final submission deadline at [aecom.com/urbansos](http://aecom.com/urbansos)

September

Judging process

October 1, 2012

Announcement of semi-finalists

Week of November 12, 2012

Presentation and critique of semi-finalists' submissions in Shanghai

## Judging

The finalist teams will be selected by a five-member judging panel chosen by AECOM and comprised of design and engineering leaders from within and outside the company.

The top 20 entrants will receive special mention on the competition website as well as an exhibit that will be on display during September and October in a to-be-determined venue in Shanghai.

Three finalist teams will be invited to present their work to the judging panel in Shanghai the week of November 12, 2012. The winning team will be determined by the judging panel at this time.

Students' place of education will not impact judging.

## Notification

All entrants will be notified by e-mail by October 1, 2012 when the semi-finalists are announced. The winning team will be announced at an event in Shanghai the week of November 12, 2012.

## Winner and Prizes

Each of the three finalist teams will receive an honorarium to contribute to travel expenses related to visiting Shanghai to present the team's submission. The finalist honoraria are to contribute to expenses related to attendance and presentation in Shanghai only and cannot be exchanged for other prizes. In addition, each team will receive US\$500 to contribute to additional costs. No other costs or fees will be covered by AECOM or the sponsors.

The winning team (or teams) will receive a cash prize. The total prize money is valued at US\$15,000, which may be divided amongst one or more winning teams.

A further US\$25,000 in cash and in-kind staff hours will be donated by AECOM to a charitable or humanitarian organization or related agency to help further develop the winning proposal.

Decisions made by the judging panel shall be final.

## Number of Entries

Individuals may participate on only one team. Each team is permitted to enter only one submission.

## Publication Restrictions

Entrants may not refer to projects that have already been implemented or which have been designed on the basis of any agreement entered into by the entrant or entrants with a public, public-private or fully private body with the intention of actual development of the project in question. Similarly, entries may not refer to projects published before the last day of the deliberations of the judging panel.

## Infringement of Copyright and Other Intellectual Property

All work submitted for the competition must be the entrant's original work. It is the entrant's sole responsibility to ensure that the work submitted does not infringe upon the intellectual property rights of any third party, including, but not limited to copyright, trademark and design right. AECOM shall not be responsible for entrant's infringement of any third party intellectual property rights, regardless of whether said infringement was known or should have been known by the entrant.

## Use of Submitted Works

Entrant agrees that AECOM and competition sponsors are granted the non-exclusive reproduction rights to all entries for AECOM's advertising, promotion, exhibition, print publication and Internet purposes directly relating to the competition.

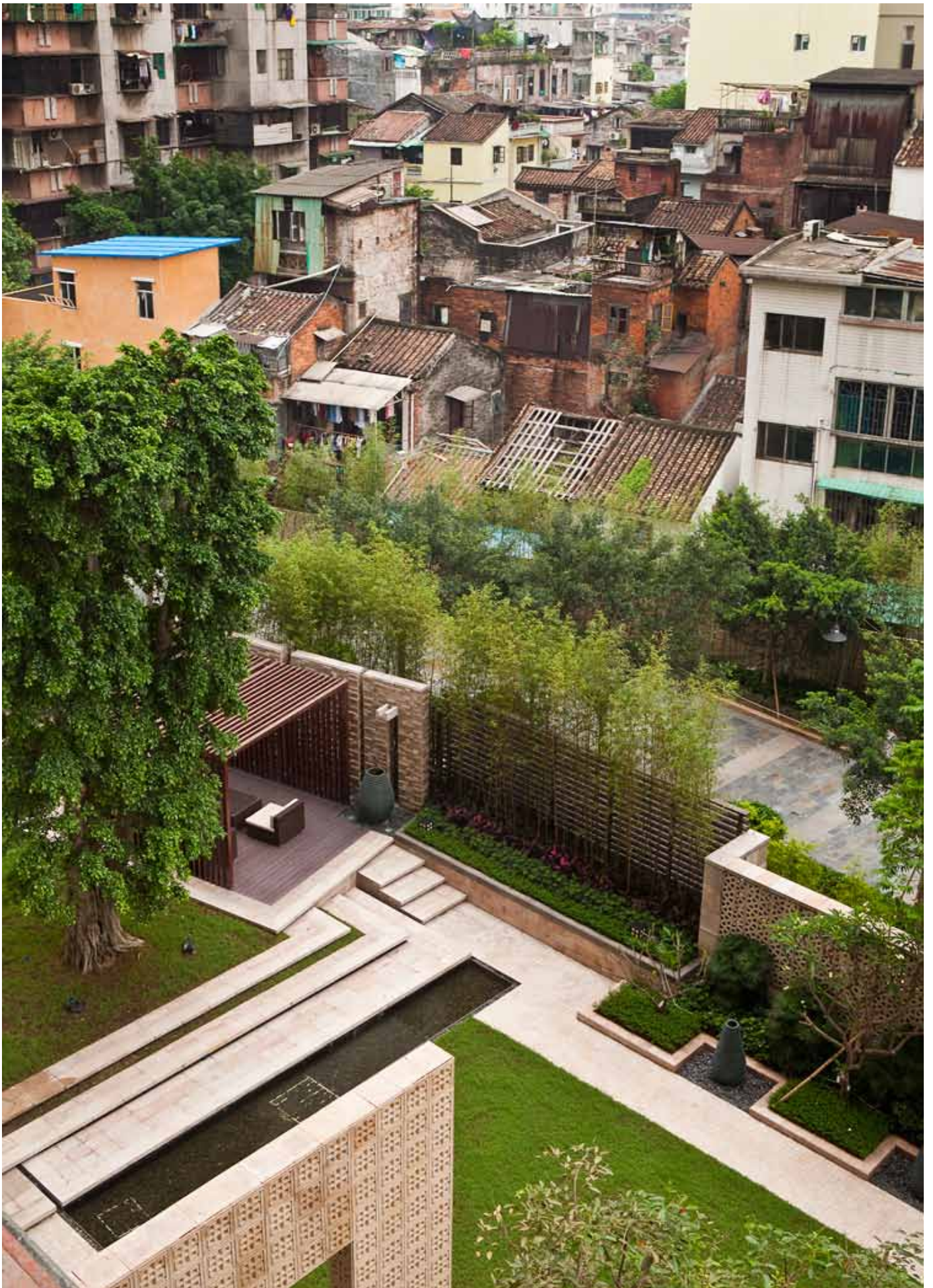
AECOM shall have no responsibility for any unauthorized use of the entrant's works by any third party, including but not limited to the sponsors.

## Public Announcement + Exhibition

The top 20 submissions will be exhibited online at [aecom.com/urbansos](http://aecom.com/urbansos) and in a month-long exhibit in Shanghai in November-December 2012.

## Further Information + Questions

All information required can be found on this website. If you have questions that cannot be answered online, please contact AECOM at [urbansos@aecom.com](mailto:urbansos@aecom.com).



Guangzhou, China

AECOM

Apply online by August 31, 2012  
[aecom.com/urbansos](http://aecom.com/urbansos)