

# urbanSHED

## International Design Competition

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### **NEW YORK CITY LAUNCHES INTERNATIONAL DESIGN COMPETITION FOR A SAFER, MORE APPEALING SIDEWALK SHED**

*Competition to Tap Global Design Community to Develop Sidewalk Shed of the Future*

*Finalists to Receive \$25,000 in Awards and Winner to See Design Built in Lower Manhattan*

The New York City Department of Buildings (DOB) and the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIANY) today announced the launch of the urbanSHED International Design Competition with support from the Alliance for Downtown New York, ABNY Foundation, Illuminating Engineering Society New York City Section (IESNYC), and the New York Building Congress. The unique competition challenges the global design community to create a new standard of sidewalk shed design that improves the pedestrian experience while maintaining or exceeding the required safety standards in New York City. The urbanSHED International Design Competition is open to architects, engineers, designers, and students from around the world, allowing for the widest possible participation. Sidewalk sheds are typically built over public space to protect pedestrians during construction activity, and there are currently more than 6,000 sidewalk sheds installed and in use today at New York City's buildings and construction sites, spanning more than 1,000,000 linear feet.

The competition is being sponsored by the DOB, AIANY, Alliance for Downtown New York, ABNY Foundation, IESNYC, and New York Building Congress with additional support from the NYC Department of Transportation (DOT), NYC Department of City Planning (DCP) and the Structural Engineers Association of New York (SEAoNY).

“Sidewalk sheds play a critical role in protecting New Yorkers during ongoing construction projects, but they can also hide the City’s breathtaking architecture and one-of-a-kind streetscapes,” said DOB Commissioner Robert LiMandri. “That’s why we are inviting the leading architects, designers, and students from around the world to develop a new kind of sidewalk shed – one that is not only safe and functional, but is also pleasing to the eye. These sheds should complement the beauty of our city’s neighborhoods, not take away from them. I look forward to serving on the jury and seeing the solutions that address this great challenge.”

“The economic crisis permits us to stop and reconsider business as usual at construction sites,” said Rick Bell, the executive director of the AIANY. “That’s one of the reasons why the urbanSHED competition is so important at this point in time. We have the opportunity to call for a different, greener, and better-designed way to protect passers-by. When construction picks up again, the new standard – one that addresses our city’s safety, sustainability, and streetscape concerns – will be ready, and it will be something of which New Yorkers can be proud.”

“The UrbanSHED competition is a perfect complement to our *Re:Construction* initiative, which transforms Lower Manhattan construction barriers into engaging temporary works of art and architecture,” said Elizabeth H. Berger, president of the Downtown Alliance. “Sidewalk sheds are a necessary but unattractive fact of life in Lower Manhattan, and we salute Bob LiMandri, AIA and the New York Building Congress for recognizing that safety and curb appeal can go hand in hand. We are pleased to partner with them on this important and innovative program.”

“The IESNYC is proud to be part of the urbanSHED competition. The sidewalk shed is a major feature in the NYC streetscape and over-ripe for improvement. The ability of light to provide beauty and security while being efficient and effective will be a crucial to the success of the new designs,” said Charles Cameron, vice-president, IESNYC.

“The barriers that surround construction sites protect the public during construction activity but are often unattractive. Recognizing the need for the construction industry to be good neighbors, the Building Congress, through its philanthropic arm, the New York Building Foundation, recently enacted a pilot program, which proved that site safety and improved design are not mutually exclusive. We are pleased that the Department of Buildings and the AIANY, with the help of professionals throughout the industry, are building upon and expanding this effort,” said Richard T. Anderson, President, New York Building Congress.

“The urbanSHED competition provides a unique opportunity to rethink these ubiquitous and unsightly structures. Raising the standards of design excellence and bringing more light and air onto the sidewalk will not only improve the pedestrian experience but will also benefit retailers and their customers,” said DCP Commissioner Amanda M. Burden.

“We need to do everything we can to create new, world-class streetscapes but that doesn’t mean that we have to sacrifice the quality of our streets during construction,” said DOT Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan. “While sidewalk sheds are typically viewed as inevitable eyesores, this competition will bring fresh perspectives and aim to make our works-in-progress as attractive as the finished product.”

“This worldwide competition is a great way to encourage designers to build a stronger, safer sidewalk shed than ever before, and the Structural Engineers Association of New York is proud to be a part of it,” said Robert Otani, of the Structural Engineers Association of New York. “We are confident that the results of this effort will set a new standard for sidewalk sheds and enhance New York City's reputation for creative design and innovative engineering.”

Nine world-renowned architects, engineers and civic decision-makers will serve on the jury for the urbanSHED design competition. The jury is comprised of NYC Department of Planning Director Amanda M. Burden, FAICP; David M. Childs, FAIA, of the Municipal Arts Society; Craig Dykers, AIA MNAL, of Snøhetta; NYC Buildings Commissioner Robert LiMandri; Jean Oei of Morphosis; NYC Department of Transportation Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan; Craig Michael Schwitter, P.E., of Buro Happold North America; Frank Sciame of the New York Building Congress; and Ada Tolla of LOT-EK. Susanna Sirefman of Dovetail Design Strategists is the competition advisor overseeing the development and management of the competition.

The urbanSHED International Design Competition will take place in two stages. During Stage I, the jury will select up to three designs based on criteria such as the design's safety, sustainability and constructability. Designs also will be evaluated on their impact on the streetscape and pedestrian experience, use of both natural light and the required electrical lighting, and improvements to structural components. Competitors must enter their submissions no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, October 2, 2009. The finalists will be announced during the AIANY's Architecture Week in October 2009. Following Stage 1, all of the submitted designs will be featured on the competition's Web site at [www.urbanshed.org](http://www.urbanshed.org) – including the finalists' proposals.

The finalists, who will be awarded \$5,000 each, will participate in Stage II, where they will further develop their designs to meet or exceed current technical and structural requirements to assure safety and stability. They also will receive recommendations from a technical advisory group of leading design and construction industry stakeholders. The finalists' designs also must be cost-effective to produce, install, maintain, and reuse over time. During Stage II, the jury will select a winning design and announce their decision in December 2009. The winner will receive a \$10,000 cash prize, and as a part of the top award, the Alliance for Downtown New York will facilitate the construction of a full-scale prototype of the winning entry on a job site in Lower Manhattan as part of its RE:Construction art program.

Competitors must submit illustrations of their design concept as it would appear when installed at the DOB headquarters at 280 Broadway in Manhattan. The current sidewalk shed installed at 280 Broadway exemplifies many of the complexities that shed contractors must face when erecting these structures, including heavy pedestrian traffic, car passenger access, street parking, public doorways, loading docks, parking garage entries, bus shelters, coffee carts, storefront, retail and DOT signage.

To register for this competition, submit a completed Online Registration Form at [www.acteva.com/go/aianyc](http://www.acteva.com/go/aianyc). Further information on the competition, including details on eligibility, schedule, and judging criteria, is available at [www.urbanshed.org](http://www.urbanshed.org).

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