

**The SOM Prize and Travel Fellowship for Architecture, Design, and Urban Design**  
**2017 Program Guidelines**

**1. Goal of the Fellowship**

The mission of the SOM Foundation is to identify and nurture emerging talent by sponsoring prestigious research awards and traveling study grants to students of architecture, design\*\*, and urban design. The SOM Prize is a \$50,000 research and travel grant that enables one outstanding student to do in-depth research, collaborate with other designers, and pursue independent study outside the realm of established patterns. The Foundation expects the SOM Prize recipient to disseminate their research and travel activities through a publication, lecture series, exhibit, or other educative means.

Two awards are planned for 2017 — the \$50,000 SOM Prize and a \$20,000 Travel Fellowship. Graduating undergraduate and graduate students of accredited U.S. schools of architecture, design, and urban design are eligible. A multidisciplinary, independent jury of prominent professionals, together with one SOM Foundation director, will select the winners based on portfolios, research plans and travel itineraries. The Intent to Apply form must be postmarked no later than Monday, April 17, 2017, and submissions are due Monday, July 17, 2017. Winners will be notified no later than July 28, 2017.

*\*\* Includes interior architecture, landscape architecture, environmental graphics, and industrial and product design*

**2. Eligibility**

- 2.1. Candidates must have graduated or be graduating between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017 with a bachelor's, master's degree or a PhD from an accredited professional degree program at a U.S. school of architecture, urban design or design. Attendance at a U.S. school and graduation are a must; U.S. citizenship not required.
- 2.2. Candidates should be academically accomplished, demonstrate the highest design aspirations, and intend to enter the professional practice of architecture, design, or urban design.
- 2.3. The Fellowship award will be forfeited to the Foundation if candidate does not complete studies and graduate with a degree.

**3. Application Process and Deadlines**

- 3.1. Return the **Intent to Apply** form (attached) to the SOM Foundation. The form must be postmarked no later than **Monday, April 17, 2017**. Forms received with a postmark later than April 19 may not be considered.
- 3.2. An identification number will be assigned to each candidate. Candidates will be notified of their number via e-mail. This number is random and does not reflect the order in which a portfolio will be judged. The identification number is to assure the anonymity of each candidate and must be included on the cover and each page of the submission documents.

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- 3.3. Submissions — described below — must be received no later than **5:00 p.m. (CST), Monday, July 17, 2017**. Portfolios received later than 5:00 p.m. may not be considered.
- 3.4. Winners will be notified no later than **Friday, July 28, 2017**.

### 4. Submission Requirements

Note: Items 4.1 – 4.4 should be enclosed in a 9 x 12 envelope and placed inside the front cover of the portfolio binder.

- 4.1. The **Cover Sheet** (attached).
- 4.2. A sealed Letter of Recommendation on school letterhead from a thesis advisor or senior faculty member. The letter should address the student's specific strengths and how the award will further his/her growth. Applicants are strongly advised to secure this letter before leaving campus at the end of the semester. Many professors will not be readily available during the summer and the letter of recommendation is mandatory.
- 4.3. The **Authorization Form** (attached) signed by the department chair or dean. This form confirms that the student meets all requirements for eligibility. Applicants are strongly advised to secure this authorization form before leaving campus at the end of the semester. An appropriate staff person may not be readily available during the summer and the authorization form is mandatory.
- 4.4. The **Copyright Release Statement** (attached). The winning submissions will become part of the SOM Foundation's archive. The Foundation reserves the right to use the winning submissions, winners' travel memos and Final Report – or any portion thereof - in press releases, presentations, exhibits, history books, and similar publications, as well as for public access for student and educational purposes in all media, including the Internet.
- 4.5. A **Portfolio**. *Carefully review the requirements below.*

In the past, jurors felt students were putting more work into the portfolio casings than into the portfolio contents. Therefore, the Foundation strongly recommends a commonly used binder. The Itoya Portfolio Binder (8 ½ x 11 or 11 x 17 in black) can be found in most college and university bookstores, local art supply stores, or online at Amazon.com or DickBlick.com. Candidates are not required to use the Itoya portfolio; however, they should match its specifications as closely as possible. Portfolios that exceed size and format specifications may be disqualified.

- Twelve, one-sided pages not to exceed 11" x 17". The 12-page total does not include the cover sheet, the letter of recommendation, the authorization form, copyright release statement or the candidate's research agenda and travel itinerary (see below).
- The candidate's name or school should **not** appear on any page other than the cover sheet. Instead, the assigned identification number must be included on the binder cover and on each page of the portfolio.
- The submission should be prepared under academic supervision (i.e. department chair or academic advisor) and clearly demonstrate progressive achievement.
- Only work completed at the college or university where the candidate was/is enrolled can be included. No professional work allowed.
- Given the collaborative nature of most programs, group work is allowed; however, it should be used sparingly. The candidate's role in the project must be clearly explained in the portfolio.

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- No glued pieces or loose sheets that may become separated from portfolio.
- Retain a copy of your submission for your professional files. Originals will not be returned.

### 4.6 Research Abstract and Travel Itinerary

Candidates are advised to carefully prepare their research proposal and travel itinerary, as these may be reviewed by the jury in advance of design portfolios. Spend adequate time developing an idea and explaining how it relates to your interests and how you and the profession may benefit. It is meaningful if candidates include specific locations, sites, structures and professionals they intend to visit, document and interview. Check for typos and misspellings.

- The research abstract is limited to one page.
- The proposed travel itinerary is limited to one page (cost breakdown not necessary).
- Bind one copy of each in the portfolio (not counted as two of the 12 project pages) and send one copy of each separately – may be placed inside 9 x 12 envelope with administrative forms listed above.

### 5. Submittals

- 5.1. Submittals must be received no later than **5:00 p.m. (CST), Monday, July 17**. Portfolios received later than 5:00 p.m. may not be considered.
- 5.2. Candidates are strongly advised to package their portfolio carefully and send it via a delivery service that can be tracked (i.e. FedEx, DHL, UPS).
- 5.3. Hand deliveries must be received and signed for at the address below
- 5.4. Address: Nancy Abshire AIA RIBA  
Executive Director  
SOM Foundation  
224 S. Michigan Ave., Suite 1000  
Chicago, IL 60604  
  
Encl: Submission/SOM Prize

### 6. Notification of Award

- 6.1. Winners and their schools will be notified no later than **Friday, July 28**.
- 6.2. Each award recipient's submission is incorporated into the Foundation's archive, and each recipient is responsible for retaining a copy of the material prior to submission. Originals will not be returned for any reason.

### 7. Recipient Responsibilities

#### 7.1. The SOM Prize

7.1.1. By accepting the award, the recipient agrees to:

- provide the Foundation with an electronic copy of his portfolio submission

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- complete his or her research and travel within 18 months of receiving the award, or *in exceptional cases* within an agreed upon time, depending on circumstances
- provide monthly progress reports via e-mail or letter to the Foundation Executive Director
- file a Final Report within four (4) months after completing research and travel
- disseminate their research findings and travel activities through a publication, lecture series, exhibit, or other educative means ( to be coordinated with the Foundation)
- Note: All Fellowship money will be forfeited to the Foundation in event research and/or travel is not completed within those 18 months, unless written pre-approval is obtained from SOM Foundation chairman

**7.1.2** The recipient also is required to submit an update in letter format detailing his or her research plans and/or travel itinerary for approval prior to undertaking the Fellowship. The Foundation expects actual research plans and/or study travel not to be less extensive than original proposal.

**7.1.3** Upon final approval of their travel/research plan, the award recipient will receive 40% of the funds. A further 30% of the funds will be made available at inception of their Travel/Research. The remaining 30% is payable upon receipt and approval of the Final Report. It should be noted that to cover travel expenses for the presentation of the research findings, as referred in paragraph 7.1.1 above, the recipient should reserve a minimum of twenty five hundred dollars ( \$2,500 ) of the final payment for this purpose.

**7.1.4** A minimum of four weeks is required to prepare and mail funds.

### **7.2** The \$20,000 Travel / Research Fellowship

**7.2.1** By accepting the award, the recipient agrees to:

- provide the Foundation with an electronic copy of his portfolio submission
- complete his or her research and travel within 18 months of receiving the award, or *in exceptional cases* within an agreed upon time, depending on circumstances
- provide monthly progress reports via e-mail or letter to the Foundation Executive Director
- file a Final Report within four (4) months after completing research and travel
- Note: All Fellowship money will be forfeited to the Foundation in event research and/or travel is not completed within those 18 months, unless written pre-approval is obtained from SOM Foundation chairman

**7.2.2** The recipient is also required to submit an update in letter format detailing his or her research plans and/or travel itinerary for approval prior to undertaking the Fellowship. The Foundation expects actual research plans and/or study travel not to be less extensive than original proposal.

**7.2.3** Upon final approval of their travel/research plan, the award recipient will receive 70% of the funds. The remaining 30% is payable upon receipt and approval of the Final Report.

**7.2.4** A minimum of four weeks is required to prepare and mail funds.

**8 Final Report**

**8.1 Requirements:**

- Original plan of research and statement of intent
- Final travel itinerary with cities and sites visited
- Visual record illustrated by sketches and digital photographs
- Personal viewpoint and analysis of studies and travel
- Overview of the research findings and travel activities
- Final statement describing how the Fellow's original intentions were fulfilled by travels

**8.2** Final Report should be submitted in a binder or fixed binding, either on one-sided or two-sided sheets, whichever is best to present the information. It is recommended that the final report be printed on 8 ½ "x 11" sheets in vertical format to facilitate archival storage.

**8.3** The Final Report and other supporting written and graphic material as well as digital photographs must also be provided in an electronic format for the Foundation archives.

**8.4** Fellows are encouraged to retain a copy of final report for their own record prior to submission, as the Final Reports become a permanent part of the SOM Foundation's archive and will not be returned for any reason. The Foundation hopes that over the years, each Fellow's report will become a valuable and convenient record for assessing the program's benefit to both the recipient and the profession.

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**2017 SOM Prize and Travel Fellowship for Architecture, Design, and Urban Design**  
*Intent to Apply*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street, City, State, Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Permanent Address (if different from above)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone (if different)

\_\_\_\_\_  
University / College

\_\_\_\_\_  
Month / Year of Graduation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Professionally Accredited Degree

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Must be postmarked no later than Monday, April 17, 2017.**

Mail to: Nancy Abshire AIA RIBA  
Executive Director  
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill Foundation  
224 S. Michigan Ave., Suite 1000  
Chicago, IL 60604

*For Foundation Use Only*

I.D. Number \_\_\_\_\_

**SKIDMORE, OWINGS & MERRILL FOUNDATION**

**2017 SOM Prize and Travel Fellowship for Architecture, Design, and Urban Design**  
*Cover Sheet*

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Identification Number

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Name

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E-Mail Address

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Street, City, State, Zip

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Permanent Address (if different from above)

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Phone Number

---

Cell Phone (if different)

---

University / College

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Professionally Accredited Degree

---

Month / Year of Graduation

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*Authorization Form*

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Student's Name

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University / College

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Professionally Accredited Degree

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Month / Year of Graduation

I affirm the above student has / will graduate from our University / College, receiving the degree so noted on the date stated above.

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Name (Department Chair or Dean)

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E-mail Address

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Title

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Signature

---

Date



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## Copyright Release Statement

I hereby affirm that I am the sole owner of all materials submitted for the Skidmore, Owings & Merrill Foundation (SOM Foundation) Travel Fellowship Program competition including text, drawings, diagrams, photographs and slides (the Submission). I also affirm that I will be sole owner and author of all monthly travel reports (Travel Reports) and of all final report materials including text, drawings, diagrams, photographs and slides (Final Report). I hereby grant my permission for publication of the Submission, Travel Reports and / or Final Report for the SOM Foundation Traveling Fellowship Program to the SOM Foundation for potential use in press releases, presentations, exhibits, history books and similar publications; as well as for public access for student and educational purposes in all media including the Internet.

If the submission, travel reports and / or final report is selected for publication, I hereby grant a limited license to the SOM Foundation of any and all copyright and trademark rights in the submission, travel reports and final report. It is understood that this license is granted without reservation and remuneration, the publication being the sole consideration for the granting of permission.

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Signature

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Date

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Print Name