

July 7th 2016



The City Above the City – new international design competition

Metsä Wood's next Plan B initiative to explore possibilities of wood in solving the problems of urbanization.

Cities all over the world are in dire need of new ways to house a rapidly growing urban population. The City Above the City international wood design competition invites architects and students from all over the world to solve the challenges of urbanization in both sustainable and humane ways.

The world's increasing urbanization is one of the most significant issues facing humanity today. By 2050, 2/3 of the world's population will live in cities. Consequently, urban growth is fast outpacing the ability to build affordable and sustainable living space.

“We need to start building up, and stop tearing down. We have an alternative. A building extension constructed with a timber frame can be a fast, sustainable and inexpensive solution “, says **Michael Green** of Vancouver-based Michael Green Architects.

Research shows that approximately 1/4th of existing buildings are strong enough to carry additional floors made of wood. Moreover, it is the only material light enough to build quickly on to existing structures. This makes wood a highly promising building material for providing living space for billions of people – while also preserving the architectural heritage of our cities.

Wanted: a more livable and sustainable solution

The City Above the City competition is a continuation of Metsä Wood's project Plan B, started in 2015 as an ambitious project to explore the possibilities of using wood in urban construction. This year's design competition is looking for bold and ambitious plans that connect wood construction processes to an existing urban context – in a way that is friendly to both people and nature.

The entrants are encouraged to select a centrally-located building in one of the world's most populated cities and develop an innovative wood design solution that adds density through

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additional floors. Building additional floors with Kerto® LVL (Laminated Veneer Lumber) as the primary material is a central requirement for the design work. Preferred cities include London, Berlin, Paris, Washington, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Istanbul and Shanghai.

The design work itself must either integrate with an existing structure or knit itself into the urban fabric of the city. Entrants are challenged to propose construction systems that draw on the performance characteristics of a variety of wood technologies.

Winner chosen by an internationally accomplished jury

The competition will be judged by an international jury with extensive in-depth expertise in wood structure architecture and sustainable design.

Michael Green founded his architecture firm MGA and his not for profit school DBR | Design Build Research to focus on progressive architecture, research, education and innovation. From offices in Vancouver and Portland, he and his team of 25 designers work on international projects that are diverse in their scale, building type and location. Michael is vested in helping build healthier communities through innovative architecture, interiors, landscape, and urban design. Michael is particularly known for his research, leadership and advocacy in promoting the use of wood in the built environment with extensive international talks on the subject, including 3 TED events culminating in his 2013 TED talk which has been viewed over a million times.

Mike Kane is a British senior lecturer at London South Bank University in architecture, and a director of KMK Architects. Kane focuses on the ways in which cities can prepare for the climate, resources limitation and increasing urbanization. He has regularly contributed to the Energy & Resource efficiency module and has a keen interest in low-carbon and resource efficient architecture.

Stefan Winter is a professor at the Chair of Timber Construction and Structural at the Technical University of Munich. His main research interests include energy-efficient multi-story timber structures, building modernization with prefabricated components, and adhesives for load-bearing timber structures.

Metsä Wood invites participants to submit their work for the City Above the City design competition by September 30th 2016 5 pm CET. The prizes of the competition include one grand prize of 10,000 €, two second prizes of 5,000 € and five third prizes of 2,000 €. The top 10 entries will be published.

Read more about the competition: planb.metsawood.com

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Contact: competition2016@metsagroup.com

Images: <http://databank.metsagroup.com/!/JJ2dH89K2z5->

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Metsä Wood provides competitive and environmentally friendly wood products for construction, industrial customers and distributor partners. We manufacture products from Nordic wood, a sustainable raw material of premium quality. Our sales in 2015 were EUR 0.9 billion, and we employ about 2,000 people. Metsä Wood is part of Metsä Group.