

How to Apply

Complete the registration form at uli.org/hines2023 by December 9, 2022 to register a team. Create a free ULI account in order to register. Read the instructions below and view a [Sample Registration Form](#).

Please note that the deadline to register is December 9, however we ask that you start and complete your registration as early as possible! The application includes requesting various approvals depending on your status in school, as well as approval from your department or program head.

ULI invites teams from accredited educational institutions worldwide to participate in the 2023 competition. However, while the competition is open to teams around the world, ULI does have limited funds for student travel in the finalist phase. Students in Europe also can compete in the ULI Hines Student Competition – Europe. As of 2023, students in Asia Pacific can also compete in the ULI Hines Student Competition – Asia.

For details about team composition requirements, visit the How to Form a Team section on this page.

How the Competition Works

Registration

Through the fall semester, students form teams and register those teams with ULI. ULI staff review all application materials and confirm whether teams meet the eligibility requirements to compete.

First Round

On the first day of the competition in January, ULI sends the challenge brief to all team members and announces the host city and site. The challenge brief describes the specific challenge and deliverables for the competition. You can find an example of a challenge brief here. For the next 15 days, team members work together to create a proposal for the site that meets the requirements in the challenge brief. Teams meet in person or virtually if team members are remote, and consult with their faculty and professional advisors. Teams must submit all required documents by the deadline. ULI staff review all submitted materials to confirm whether submissions are complete. You can find examples of past submissions online by clicking on Previous Winners and Finalists on this website. There are no live presentations during this round.

Finalist Round

In February, a jury of ULI members evaluates all complete entries and selects those teams that will receive an honorable mention and the four finalist teams that advance to the second phase of the competition. All submissions are anonymous to the jury; they do not see team members or school names before making their selections. ULI alerts all teams of their status by late February. Finalist teams refine their original proposal with feedback from the jury, submit revised documents, and prepare to present their proposals live to the jury in April.

Site Visit and Rehearsal

One member of each finalist team receives an all-expenses-paid trip in early March to join a tour of the competition site and receive a briefing on it from local stakeholders. In mid-March, all finalists teams present virtually to the Rehearsal Advisors – a panel of local ULI members – to get feedback on their presentation.

Finals

Typically, all finalist team members receive an all-expenses-paid trip to meet in the host city in April for two days of live public presentation of their proposal and Q&A sessions with jury members. In 2023, we are planning to hold the finals in person. After jury deliberations, the jury chair announces the winning team the same day. The grand prize is \$50,000, of which \$5,000 goes to the team's school(s). The remaining three finalist teams each receive \$10,000.

A note on the 2023 competition

ULI understands that students face many challenges to forming teams and competing this year. In 2023, we will not require teams to send physical copies of their submission to ULI. And, while the registration deadline is December 9, 2022, we will consider extending the deadline only to teams that have one or more team members who were not enrolled during the fall 2022 semester but will be enrolled full time in the spring 2023 semester. Please reach out to us via HinesCompetition@uli.org to discuss and we will make allowances on a case-by-case basis.

Application Overview

Teams that wish to compete must submit the following information via an online application:

- Name and contact information for all five team members;
- Degree program information for all five team members;
- A one-page résumé for each of the five team members;
- Names and contact information for the team's faculty advisors (up to two allowed from different disciplines);
- Names and contact information for the team's professional advisors;
- Signature of the department head of the sponsoring school; and
- Verification forms for each team member who is a part-time graduate student or a fifth-year eligible undergraduate student, such as BArch or BLA student.

Application Instructions

Review the eligibility requirements below, form your team, and complete the online application at <http://www.uli.org/hines2023>. We will discard any applications submitted by e-mail.

DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST WEEK TO APPLY! The submission form requires a lot of information and asks you to submit faculty references so that ULI can determine the eligibility of your team. You will receive quicker responses to your questions and have an easier time if you start the application process early. You can save the form and come back to it.

Eligibility

Ineligible to compete are members of the jury; the competition faculty and professional advisers; all officials, current employees, and recent former employees of ULI; the employees, students, and immediate family members of any of these parties; and those whom ULI deems to present a conflict of interest; and all students from the finalist teams in the 2021 and 2022 competitions.

ULI reserves the right to disqualify teams, limit the number of teams that can participate in the competition, and select teams for participation based on geographic diversity, team statements, team makeup, university diversity, or other criteria listed in the competition guidelines.

How to Form a Team

There is no limit to how many teams may be formed at a given college or university.

Intercollegiate teams and teams with members in different states and countries are welcome and have been successful in the competition.

Team Composition

At this time, we do not have the capacity to allow more undergraduates to compete. Please do not email us to ask for an exception to this long-standing requirement.

- Each team must be composed of five graduate students. Undergraduates in the fifth year of a five-year pre-professional program, such as a BLA or BArch, also may compete.
- The team members must represent a minimum of three disciplines that grant three different degrees, one of which must be a non-design-related discipline. Your team is not likely to advance to the finalist round without a team member with strong graphic skills. ULI does not consider team members' undergraduate degrees when determining whether the team meets the interdisciplinary requirements.
- For example, a team could consist of the following (these are just examples, there are other variations that can work):

- 2 architecture (MArch) students
 - 2 landscape architecture (MLA) students
 - 1 business (MBA) student

- 1 architecture (MArch) student
 - 1 planning (MCP) student
 - 1 historic preservation (MHP) student
 - 1 real estate finance (MS) student
 - 1 real estate development (MRED) student

- 1 urban design (MUD) student
 - 2 landscape architecture (MLA) students
 - 1 planning (MCP) student
 - 1 real estate development (MRED) student

2 business (MBA) students
1 planning (MCP) student
1 landscape architecture (MLA) student
1 architecture (MArch) student

- Each student team member must be a currently enrolled full-time as a graduate student in a degree-granting program.
 - Exception: Part-time graduate students may participate in the competition provided that they have completed one semester by the start of the competition and they will be a part-time student during the entire competition period of January 9 to April 30, 2023. During team registration, they must submit to ULI a verification of their status from a director of their program. They can request this verification via the online registration form.
- Students from different educational institutions may form a single team, as long as all other individual and team requirements are satisfied. For example, if your university does not offer a landscape architecture program and you would like to have that discipline represented in your team, you can work with another university to achieve the mix you seek. For example, the 2020 and 2021 winning teams were composed of students from multiple universities.
- Students enrolled in dual-degree programs must designate which degree program they represent on the team for the purposes of the team composition requirements. For example, a student who is enrolled in a joint MRED/MArch program must state which discipline they are representing on the team.
- The only exceptions to these formulas for team formation are at universities where the graduate degree itself is considered a multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary degree. This is very rare, but if you think this might apply to your team, please e-mail hinescompetition@uli.org before the application deadline.
- Once the team has registered, it must remain intact throughout the entire process. We allow you to replace a student team members only in extraordinary circumstances and with written approval from ULI. If a member of a registered team decides not to continue, the team must replace the departing member and must still satisfy the requirements for team composition.
- Team members—students, faculty, outside professionals—are not required to be members of ULI.

Communication with ULI

- Each team must designate one student member as the team leader who will act as a contact person with ULI.

- Please note that because of the volume of requests, and in order to guarantee the standards of the competition, ULI does not accept any phone calls related to this competition. Address questions and comments to hinescompetition@uli.org.

Faculty and Professional Advisors

- Each team must have at least one faculty advisor from its university. The faculty advisor can be from any program. This faculty member serves only in an advisory role, they may not be an active team participant or a direct participant in the production of any competition materials.
- Teams can have a second optional faculty advisor. If your team has two faculty advisors, we recommend that they represent different disciplines.
- Each team must have a program head approve its application. The program head might be a program director, department chair, or dean. The individual who approves the application does not have to be the faculty advisor. By approving the application, the program head confirms that all team members are full-time graduate students enrolled for the spring 2023 semester (or part-time or undergraduate under the exceptions noted above) and that the university is committed to supporting the team's efforts.
- Each team has the option of using outside professionals who agree to act as additional advisors. The professional advisors, like the faculty advisors, may not be an active team participant or a direct participant in the production of any competition materials. In the past we have limited teams to two professional advisors. In 2023, teams are not limited in the number of professional advisors they can have. If there is a local real estate professional with whom you would like to work, feel free to contact them directly. If you need help finding a local real estate professional, you may e-mail your local ULI district council for assistance ([see the complete list of District Councils](#)). If outside design professionals are not available through the local ULI district council, we recommend you contact your local chapter of the [American Institute of Architects](#) or the [American Society of Landscape Architects](#). If you need further assistance, please e-mail hinescompetition@uli.org.

Reasons for Disqualification

A team can be disqualified if:

- it does not have the proper number or mix of students
- it does not have a faculty advisor
- it does not have the endorsement of its school/department/program head its application is late
- it does not include all the necessary documentation with the application

FAQs

If you cannot find the answer to your question below, please e-mail hinescompetition@uli.org.

Does my team have to receive our verification of eligibility from our department head before we can submit our registration form?

No. Verification can be received after the team submits their registration form. The deadline to receive verification is December 20th.

How does the jury process work?

On January 9, ULI releases the challenge brief to all registered teams it has approved to compete. This is when the teams find out the host city and site. Students receive photos, video, and GIS files for the site, as well as information about the city and site to help them begin their analysis. Teams then have 15 days to produce and submit the deliverables that ULI has outlined in the challenge brief. Before the end of the last day of the competition, teams must submit all deliverables electronically. The jury will meet twice, once in February, and again in April to review submissions and choose the finalists and winner, respectively. For more detailed information about the jury process, review [How to Apply](#).

I don't live/study in the U.S. or Canada, can I still compete?

Yes. Students outside of the United States and Canada may compete. For more details, review [How to Apply](#).

Can I form a team with students from different universities?

Yes, intercollegiate teams are welcome and have been successful in the competition (e.g., in 2021, the winning team was comprised of students from three different universities in Toronto). Teams with students from different colleges and universities have been successful even when those schools are in different states or provinces or different countries. Join the [LinkedIn group](#) and post if you are looking for team members or professional advisors!

Five of us in a graduate program in real estate studies want to form a team. Our undergraduate degrees are in three different real estate-oriented disciplines: planning, architecture, and landscape architecture. Does that qualify as a multidisciplinary team?

No. Previously earned degrees are not considered when determining whether a team meets the multidisciplinary requirements.

Our team is composed of one MBA candidate, three MArch candidates, and one candidate pursuing a joint-degree MArch and MUP. Does that qualify as a multidisciplinary team?

Yes. Students enrolled in joint- and dual-degree programs must choose which of the programs they are representing on the team. That decision is entirely up to the students and team members.

What are design disciplines?

For the purpose of this competition, design disciplines include architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design. Other design-related programs will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Our university's graduate architecture and real estate programs are accredited by NAAB and AACSB, but our university's graduate landscape architecture program is not accredited by LAAB. Does that disqualify our team?

No. In the U.S. and Canada, only the university or college needs to be accredited by a nationally recognized U.S. or Canadian accrediting body. ULI will independently verify the authority of universities or colleges outside of the U.S. and Canada for any teams that reach the finalist stage.

Will ULI require certification that student members of a team are enrolled graduate students in relevant programs?

ULI requires that the director of a school, college, department, or degree program from, at least, the Sponsoring University, must verify the team members' eligibility to participate. If students from more than one university are participating on the same team, you may need to request verification from more than one person. When teams reach the finalist stage, ULI may take additional steps to independently verify each team member's eligibility.

I am a part-time student registered in a graduate program. Can I be part of a team?

Part-time graduate students may participate in the competition provided that they have completed one semester by the start of the competition and they will be a part-time student during the entire competition period of January 9 to April 30, 2023. During team registration, they must submit to ULI a verification of their status from a director of their program. They can request this verification via the online registration form.

When the competition site is announced, may we visit the site?

Yes, but you may not contact the site owners or public agencies involved.

Under what circumstances will a team be allowed to continue after a team member resigns or is replaced?

ULI will respond favorably if the team leader requests a waiver in writing and if the circumstances are exceptional and unavoidable.

Can a team replace a faculty or professional advisor?

Yes, you must share with ULI the name and contact information for the new advisor.

To what extent can other students, faculty, and professional advisors participate in the team's efforts?

Only in an advisory capacity. They may not draw or write anything that appears in the team's presentation at any stage of the competition.

Can a foreign national participate on a team?

Students who are citizens of any nation may participate on a team.

I am a fifth-year student in a five-year degree professional program. Am I eligible to form or join a team?

Yes. You must complete an additional verification of your eligibility in the submission portal.

Can a faculty or professional advisor advise more than one student team?

Yes, as long as the teams are aware of the situation.

Can a graduate student be on more than one team?

No.

Are members of previous winning teams eligible to participate in the current competition?

No, members of winning teams are not eligible to participate as competitors again. All participants from finalist teams from the two prior years of the competition are ineligible. Members of the jury, the competition advisers, all employees and officials of the Urban Land Institute (ULI), and the employees, associate interns, and immediate family members of any of the aforementioned parties are ineligible to compete.

Can a faculty advisor for the winning team of a previous competition serve as faculty advisor this year?

Yes. There is no restriction on the eligibility of faculty advisors from year to year.

I am graduating in June 2023, but my course work should be completed by February 2023. May I participate in the 2023 competition?

Only if you are enrolled in the semester during which the competition is conducted (i.e., the spring semester). Enrolled means that you are registered in a degree-granting graduate program and that you are a full-time student, or a part-time student who is eligible according to the requirements for part-time students. If your program is structured as a work/study program leading to a graduate degree, you may participate.