**Sponsored Thesis Project Competition on**

**Re-imagining Urban Rivers**

**Call for Project Ideas**
An opportunity for students of Architecture and Planning to receive sponsorship for their academic thesis projects, in line with the themes of this competition

Organized by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and the National Institute for Urban Affairs (NIUA)

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**Project Themes**
- Re-imagining water bodies and/or wetlands
- Developing eco-friendly riverfront projects
- Promoting river tourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Call for Project Ideas</strong></td>
<td>15 September 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Submission of Project Ideas</strong></td>
<td>19 October 2020</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Evaluation of Project Ideas</strong></td>
<td>19 October-31 October 2020</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Announcement of Selected Projects</strong></td>
<td>02 November 2020</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Write-shop with the sponsored students and their supervisors</strong></td>
<td>26-27 November 2020</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Project/Thesis undertaking period</strong></td>
<td>December 2020-June 2021</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td><strong>Final Presentation</strong></td>
<td>18 June 2021</td>
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**Who can Participate?**
Students enrolled in any post-graduate program of Architecture or Planning (any specialization) in any University/ School/ Institution across India.

**Upto 10 students will be sponsored.**

**What are the Rewards?**
All sponsored students will receive -
- A financial grant
- A Certificate of Meritorious Achievement
- An invitation to participate in a two-day write-shop in Delhi with their supervisors (if COVID-19 threat subsides) or online
- An opportunity to develop short papers on their projects to be published in a special issue publication of a reputed journal

**Top three projects will be specially recognized and awarded**

**How to submit an entry?**
- Use the dedicated template for submission of project ideas
- All entries, in PDF format, should be mailed to nmadan@niua.org and jyoti.verma@nic.in

**What is the deadline for Submission?**
**Submit your entries before 19th October 2020**

**Do you have a query?**
Please feel free to get in touch
- Nikita Madan, NIUA, nmadan@niua.org, +91 9968 723 790
- Jyoti Verma, NMCG, jyoti.verma@nic.in, +91 7405 403 625

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**Please also see:**
- Concept note with further details
- Template for submission of the project idea
- Details can also be accessed at www.niua.org
Information Note
Sponsored Thesis Project Competition on
Re-imagining Urban Rivers

A competition for students of Architecture or Planning disciplines

What is the objective of the competition?
The purpose of the this sponsored thesis competition is to tap into the intellect and creativity of students to arrive at innovative solutions for re-imagining the outlook and management of rivers that flow through cities and their associated features.

This competition provides an opportunity for students with relevant academic background to align their academic thesis research with the themes of the competition described in the next section.

The competition is organized by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and the National Institute for Urban Affairs (NIUA) under a joint project that the two organizations are implementing to promulgate river-sensitive development in our cities.

What are the competition themes?
The competition has three themes:

Theme 1: Re-imagining water bodies and/or wetlands
Water bodies and wetlands are intrinsically linked to rivers. Many wetlands are located near rivers, and act as a natural buffer to protect the river from pollution. They also serve as sinks when the water level in the river rises. Similarly, well maintained water bodies are an excellent avenue for groundwater recharge, which can complement the water supply in a city and reduce the stress on the river. However, in most cities water bodies and wetlands are in a sorry state. The first step to reversing this trend is to create a value for these features. And what we value, we usually care for.

This theme shall focus on creating a value for a water body/wetland that will make it more attractive residents in the city. This could be recreational value, social value, economic value, aesthetic value, and others, or a combination of all. The student has all the flexibility to imagine. For this theme, the student shall pick an actual water body/wetland in any city of the Ganga River Basin for the research, and demonstrate through the research how its value shall be enhanced.

Examples of possible projects include (but are not limited to) reviving a water body using nature-based solutions; developing a water body as a recreational avenue for residents; rejuvenating a water body to serve as a groundwater recharge zone; and several others.

Theme 2: Developing eco-friendly riverfront projects
Riverfront projects add both aesthetic and economic value to the river. It serves as a medium to bring the rivers to the forefront. It is also a major avenue for recreational opportunities. In doing so, riverfronts become a wonderful instrument to connect citizens to the river, which is missing in many cities today. Riverfront projects are often envisaged as large projects such as shopping plazas, condominiums, promenades, etc but such projects can be implemented at much smaller scales as well in the form of ghats, biodiversity parks, gardens, etc.

For this theme, the student shall focus on planning/designing a sustainable, nature-friendly riverfront project for any city in the Ganga River Basin. The scale and scope of the riverfront development can be identified as per the project area and its need.

Examples of possible projects include (but are not limited to) promenades; plazas; biodiversity parks; herbal gardens; and several others.
Theme 3: Promoting river tourism

In many parts of the world, river tourism has made considerable contribution to the city’s economy. It supports the livelihoods of different sections of society, and therefore contributes to the overall development of the town. As a result, there is an inherent respect for the rivers among its citizens. The river tourism potential in Indian cities is relatively untapped. If harnessed in a sustainable and eco-friendly manner, it can go a long way in creating a tangible value for the rivers.

For this theme, students shall focus on preparing a detailed development strategy or action plan for promoting any kind of eco-friendly river tourism activities in any river town of the Ganga River Basin. Particular care must be taken to ensure that the proposed project does not disturb the river health.

Examples of possible projects include (but are not limited to) water sports; river markets; river cruise; water taxis; and several others.

Where should the thesis study area be?
The study area will need to be restricted to the Ganga River Basin only, which covers eleven Indian States—Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal. Students can select any city or town in the Basin.

Who can participate?
Students enrolled in post-graduate programmes of Architecture or Planning (any specialisation) in any University/School/Institution across India.

What are the rewards?
- All students selected for sponsorship will be awarded a grant of INR 50,000 each, to undertake the research activities associated with the project.
- All students selected for sponsorship will receive a special Certificate of Meritorious Achievement, subject to completion and submission of the thesis.
- All students selected for sponsorship and their supervisors will be invited to participate in a two-day write-shop in Delhi (if the COVID-19 threat subsides) or online.
- The top three projects will be recognized and awarded.
- All students selected for sponsorship will be invited to develop short papers on their projects to be published in a special issue publication of a reputed journal.

How is the competition organized?
The competition will proceed in six stages

**Stage 1: Call for project ideas**
Launch of the competition

**Stage 2: Submission of project ideas**
Deadline 19 October 2020
Students will develop a conceptual idea for a thesis project under any one of the three themes—Reimagining water bodies and/or wetlands; Developing eco-friendly riverfront projects; Promoting river tourism. Students are expected to develop their ideas in close consultation with their supervisors. Students must use the template provided in Annexure to submit their entries of project ideas. Any entries that do not follow the template will, unfortunately, have to be rejected.

**Stage 3: Evaluation of the project ideas**
19 October-31 October 2020
An panel will evaluate the project ideas received based on the following criteria and scores.
- Is the project idea comprehensible and clear? : 30 Points
- Is the level of detail provided adequate? : 20 Points
- Is the project idea innovative and unique? : 20 Points
- Is the project idea practical? : 20 Points
- How well has the project idea been presented : 10 Points

Based on the recommendations of the panel, 10 project ideas will be selected for sponsorship. Additional ideas may be supported if they are found to be exceptionally innovative.
Stage 4: Announcement of selected projects 02 November 2020
All participants will be apprised about the outcomes of their entries. Additionally, the selected project ideas will also be displayed on the NIUA and NMCG websites. An official communication will be made to the selected students.

Stage 5: WriteShop with the sponsored students and their supervisors 26-27 November 2020
The sponsored students and their supervisors will be required to attend a 2-day WriteShop in Delhi (if found feasible and safe) or online. The purpose of this WriteShop will be to help students (a) further fine-tune their project ideas; (b) discuss data requirements for the thesis; (c) familiarize themselves with the urban river management planning framework developed by NIUA and NMCG; (d) have interaction with urban river management practitioners and experts. The costs of participation of the students and their supervisors will be covered by NIUA.

Stage 6: Project/Thesis undertaking period December 2020-June 2021
Students will undertake the project work at their own institutes with visits to the study area as per their schedules. An online meeting of each student and their supervisor with NIUA and NMCG representatives will be organized once in every two months to discuss the progress and address any challenge that may have arisen.

Note: Students will take the final examinations/jury of the Schools/Institutes as per their official schedules.

Stage 7: Final Presentations 18 June 2021
All sponsored will be invited to Delhi to make their final presentation to a panel. The top three presentations will be recognized and awarded. Certificates of merit will be issued to all participants. NMCG will also liaise with the Commissioners of the study area cities to arrange a meeting for the students to present their work, with the hope that the work will be taken up for actual implementation.

Before the presentation, the sponsored students will be required to submit the project report in a format that will be shared later.

How to submit an entry?
- Interested students should use the template in Annexure to make their submission of project ideas.
- No late entries shall be entertained.
- All entries, in PDF format, should be sent by email to nmadan@niua.org and jyoti.verma@nic.in

Some additional information
- The research grant for the sponsored students will be given to their respective institutes. It is the responsibility of the institute to further allocate the grant to the students.
- It is the responsibility of the student to discuss their project idea with the assigned supervisor. Additionally, the students need to submit an affirmation from any Authorised Representative of their Institution/School/University, in the template provided in Annexure (Part 2)
- Only students selected for the sponsorship will be contacted.
- Due to the large volume of applications envisaged, it will not be possible to provide individual feedback on entries received.
- The final jury conducted by the institute for each sponsored students, may involve one representative member from the NMCG-NIUA project team.
- Further details may be circulated by the competition organisers from time-to-time during this entire period of engagement.
- All the relevant details can also be accessed at www.niua.org

Do you have a query?
Please feel free to get in touch with our team members.

1. Nikita Madan, National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) nmadan@niua.org, +91 9968 723 790
2. Jyoti Verma, National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) jyoti.verma@nic.in, +91 7405 403 625
# Template for Submission of the Project Idea

## Sponsored Thesis Project Competition
on
Re-imagining Urban Rivers

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## Annexure

**Note:** This template has **two** parts. The first part should be filled in by the student. The second part should be filled in by the student’s Institute/School/University.

**PART 1**
To be filled up by the applicant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Proposed project title</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide the title of your project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum length:</strong> 300 characters, including spaces</td>
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</table>

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<tr>
<th>2. Selected Theme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Select any theme from the options below</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theme 1: Re-imagining water bodies and/or wetlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 2: Developing eco-friendly riverfront projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theme 3: Promoting river tourism</td>
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<tr>
<th>3. Abstract</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide a concise abstract of your project.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum length:</strong> 300 words</td>
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<tr>
<th>4. Case study area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide a brief description of the study area and why it has been selected. Feel free to use figures/tables/maps/diagrams/sketches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum length:</strong> 700 words</td>
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<tr>
<th>5. Project concept</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide a fairly detailed description of your project idea, highlighting its objective, and the method you will follow to achieve the objective. Feel free to use figures/tables/maps/diagrams/sketches</td>
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<td><strong>Maximum length:</strong> 1000 words</td>
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<th>7. Proposed timelines</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide a concise timeline for the project as a Gantt chart, in lines with the academic thesis timelines.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Period for project conceptualisation, literature review, detailed analysis and final submission shall be included.</td>
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<th>8. Student's information</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name, address, e-mail, contact number of the student</td>
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<th></th>
<th>9. Institution's information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name, address, e-mail, contact number of the Dean of Academics for the institution</td>
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<th>10. Supervisor's information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name, address, e-mail, contact number of the supervisor/ guide assigned for the project research by the institute</td>
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<th>11. Any other relevant information regarding the proposed project</th>
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<td>Maximum length: 300 words</td>
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National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)
&
National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA)
PART 2
To be filled up by an Authorized Representative of the Institution/School/University

This is to affirm that Ms/Mr………………………………………………………… is enrolled in a post-graduate programme of Planning or Architecture discipline in this Institute.

The student has discussed the project idea with his/her assigned supervisor and Head of the Department, and will be allowed to take up this project idea as part of his/her academic thesis in the event he/she is successful in receiving the sponsorship.

Details of the Authorized Representative

Name :

Designation :

Signature :

Details of the Institute

Name :

Seal of the Institute/Department :