

# ABOUT

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## AN AWARDS PROGRAM

The CIRT National Design + Construction Competition is maintained, coordinated, and judged by Construction Industry Round Table is intended for ACE Mentor Affiliate team entries. Winning teams, on behalf of their Affiliates, will receive a monetary award that can be used for any purpose to support the operations, programs, grants, and/or needs of the Affiliate.

## PROGRAM SPECIFICS

**FOUNDED** - Construction Industry Round Table created in 2007 / 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Legacy Program.

**COLLABORATION + ELIGIBILITY** - The program is coordinated with the ACE Mentor Program of America (ACE) and only teams officially registered with ACE Mentor are eligible to compete.

**THEME FOR THE PROGRAM** - Celebrating the innovations and contributions the design/construction community makes to the quality of American life, while understanding the issues and challenges the industry faces to deliver on this legacy.

**AWARD APPROACH** – Teams from any ACE Mentor Affiliate/Chapter can volunteer to participate in the CIRT National Design & Construction Competition, which uses project challenges adapted and/or modified to accommodate the competition’s parameters. The true goal is to judge the ability of the students to make a reasoned, coherent, well thought out, clear presentations on their team’s design and construction approaches that are *realistic and responsive* to the project’s objectives within time, budget, constructability constraints, etc.

**PROGRAM AWARDS** - CIRT will present prizes for the top three national finalists (\$5/3/2K) plus prizes for runner-up entries. In addition, CIRT will provide a logistical/travel expense stipend (approximately \$1,000 per team) to apply to costs associated with attending the final round as the Affiliate/Chapter best determines.

**DEFINITION OF A TEAM** - Entries to the competition must be from ACE teams comprised of at least three or more students. The intent is to encourage group dynamics requiring assignments, compromise, and/or consensus building.

**MULTIPLE TEAMS FROM ONE AFFILIATE** - CIRT ardently requests and recommends that Affiliates with more than one team contemplate submitting entries in the different challenges rather than multiple ones in the SAME category. This will greatly increase the value of the competition and improves the odds of having one of the teams among the recognized entries when spread amongst the various challenges. [Conversely, we strongly discourage one team submitting multiple entries].

**PROGRAM SCHEDULE** - The annual event is announced in the early fall and officially begins in January concluding with the final round in late April or early May at which the winner(s) will be selected and announced. [Interim milestone and final submittal dates are included in this competition package].

# TIMELINE + LOGISTICS

## TIMELINE

There are two rounds of judging in the CIRT Competition. The Preliminary Round involves an online review of all submissions. The Final Round will be held in conjunction with the CIRT Spring National Conference in Washington, DC. Teams from ACE Affiliates/Chapters that wish to participate in the national competition must comply with the following time schedule:

### January 2025 | REGISTRATION OPENS

### March 14, 2025 | SUBMISSION DEADLINE

All registrations and final entries must be officially submitted and complete by **midnight in your time zone** on Friday, March 14 (11:59:59 pm).

### March 24, 2025 | PRELIMINARY RESULTS AND FINALISTS ANNOUNCED

A preliminary jury round will determine the Finalists and Runners-Up in each challenge. Finalists are notified and plans made to bring a representative(s) from each team to Washington, DC.

### April 7, 2025 | FINALIST HOTEL RESERVATION DUE

Finalist teams will need to have made their hotel reservations in DC. Finalists will be provided precise hotel/logistical information upon being selected. The stipend will be available for each team to be used to help cover cost to attend the final round based on need, etc. from the requests of the teams.

### April 28, 2025 | FINALIST PRESENTATIONS

Finalists present to the CIRT Panel of Judges. National Winners are announced live (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> place).

## PROGRAM LOGISTICS

All competition information is available at [www.cirt.org/competition](http://www.cirt.org/competition). The national competition will use a dedicated digital platform, Slideroom, to conduct the process. **All forms and materials must be submitted via [cirt.slideroom.com](http://cirt.slideroom.com) with an official entry in order to be judged.** Links will be shared by ACE Mentor via email to ACE affiliates.

The preliminary rounds will be determined by what is submitted to the platform as summarized on a **maximum of two** “virtual boards.” Each of the options or challenges will have their top three entries identified as part of selecting the national Finalists. However, only three teams will move onto the final “presentation round” in Washington D.C. to determine the National Champion. [There is no requirement that *each* challenge has a representative among the three finalists].



# REGISTRATION + SUBMISSION

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## ONLINE ENTRY

To officially enter and compete in the Competition, all teams are **required** to complete and submit the following:

1. **Create an account** on Slideroom using the primary mentor’s email (not a student email)
  - a. Note: If you have multiple teams per affiliate, multiple accounts will need to be made (one submission per account).
2. **Completed required “Registration Form”** online at any time before the deadline. The registration form is critical for the competition to maintain contact with the teams and to establish identification of the various entries with their authors. You may log in/out, save progress, and return to the form as needed.
3. **Upload your final Competition Entry in the form of a 1-2 page PDF.** Additional details below.
4. **Hit SUBMIT to complete your entry.** Once submitted you cannot go back to change your entry.
  - **PLEASE NOTE:** The name of your Affiliate/Chapter is the ACE recognized entity for your area – NOT the name of your sponsors, mentors, firms, student group or school. If you do not see your name on the list contact ACE National to ensure you are an officially registered affiliate.

## WHAT TO SUBMIT

In addition to submitting information in the required forms, the **MATERIALS submitted for the competition are 1-2 ‘virtual boards’ (pdfs) summarizing your proposed design solution** to one of the challenges.

The Boards are extremely important as **THE basis to make the initial cut to the three finalists**. The entry therefore must be clear, concise, complete, and well thought out with sufficient and compelling information to stand independently from any written narrative or report.

“**Virtual Boards**” (limited to two) can include: a brief written explanation describing the context and thinking behind the scheme; as well as photographs (of the site, 3D model, etc.). No specific drawings or scales are prescribed, but the presentation must convey the ideas underlying the design (whether a building or not), its overall forms and spaces, its character and atmosphere. Narratives addressing the **design process** (as described below) should be on or presented as part of the boards to the degree it helps clarify and enhance the entry.

**The judges are looking for clarity, understandability, constructability, completeness, flow of ideas and how the proposed solution realistically and fully meets the precise elements of the challenge.**

### TECHNICAL NOTES:

- **File Type:** PDF; Maximum of 2 pages as your “virtual boards”
- **Size:** Boards should be created as “print-ready” for a standard 24”x36” poster (vertical or horizontal).
- **Quality:** The jury will review boards digitally; Please ensure all content is clear, in focus, and an appropriate size. Files may need to be flattened to upload and load properly for jury review; Please compress file sizes as much as possible. If they cannot see/read details they cannot consider it in the overall scoring.
- Additional materials or links will not be reviewed by the jury. Digital files will be retained by CIRT.

## DESIGN PROCESS

The following questions are representative of the type of information that would be expected along with the design concepts, renderings, etc. (**Please note:** Jurors will consider the summaries of your replies to these questions when presented as part of your “virtual board” entry.)

Question A: Define and/or describe the problems/challenges you faced when deciding on the project you chose to do for the competition.

Question B: Thoroughly describe your process, in writing and through visuals (e.g., sketches, renderings, stepped process, before and after, budgets, timelines, workflow, etc.) that specifically and realistically meets the PRECISE or exact nature of the challenge and/or the client goals/needs.

Question C: Explain how your approach is an appropriate, innovative solution that *realistically* responds to the precise project challenges (including use of materials/construction methods, etc.). Explain how your entry is different from other approaches or processes, if such is the case; and/or meets budgetary constraints, timeline issues, or other construction challenges.

Question D: Describe any social/ecological or otherwise beneficial qualities of your solution. (For example, is it universally applicable? Is it environmentally friendly? Does it use cost-effective or recyclable materials? Etc.?)

Question E: Describe what you learned from this competition.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA:

### DESIGN ASPECTS/CONSTRUCTION ELEMENTS

The following design/construction aspects **will be evaluation criteria**, and should be explained where appropriate:

- site selection and its context (built and/or natural) – before and after
- constructability (structural challenges, materials, schedules, textures, colors, etc.)
- strategy for sustainability (resulting from design and construction decisions)
- surrounding landscape/external spaces, etc.
- life and activities, in and around the building, including the qualities of enclosed spaces showing furniture, fittings and finishes (where needed or appropriate to the design competition selected).

## JUDGING

The panel of judges will be mainly comprised of CIRT member CEOs of the leading design and construction firms and groups in the United States. As such, the overall theme or evaluation criteria for the competition is one founded on the practical aspects of the profession, particularly with respect to constructability, use of materials, meeting deadlines, workflow, and establishing realistic/reasonable expenses or budgets.

***More important than the actual design solution, is the methods and processes used to arrive at a solution. Fundamentally, the spirit of this competition is one of design AND construction.***

During the final round, great weight will be given to the ability of the presenting ACE student (each team selects ONE representative) to articulate a clear, comprehensive, coherent, and cogent presentation that persuades the judges that his/her team has the winning entry most responsive and complete with respect to the challenge goals. (Preparing the student representative is part of the overall process that the other team members will receive benefit from as well).

## FINALIST LOGISTICS

If your team becomes a Finalist:

- **Physical** Boards MUST BE CREATED from your original submission and mounted on two A1 lightweight boards for your presentation (maximum of two boards, approximately 841mm x 594mm).
- These boards MUST BE identical to what was submitted online as “virtual boards.” Any change is potential grounds for disqualification.
- The Finalist will also be required to provide a hi-resolution digital copy of their entry.
- Finalists will choose one representative to give a 20-minute presentation and Q+A with the jury in-person in Washington, D.C. Additional details will be shared.

# RESOURCES + INFORMATION

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## WEBSITES

**Competition Information:** [www.cirt.org/competition](http://www.cirt.org/competition)  
**Registration + Submission:** [cirt.slideroom.com](http://cirt.slideroom.com) [opens January]

## KEY CONTACTS

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*Contact for: technical/Slideroom support,  
competition details, clarification, etc.*

## PRINTING YOUR BOARDS

CIRT will print the Worthy Finalist boards and have them delivered to the Final Presentation location on your behalf. Boards will be available to view and practice with on the day of presentations. More information and timing will be discussed with finalists via email and via meeting on Presentation day.

## MULTIPLE TEAMS FROM ONE ACE AFFILIATE/CHAPTER

CIRT STRONGLY requests and recommends that Affiliates with more than one team consider submitting entries in the different challenges rather than multiple ones in the SAME category, so as not to compete against your own team. It would greatly increase the value of the competition and improve the odds of having one of the teams among the recognized entries. Similarly, *one* team can only submit to *one* challenge; challenges and/or teams may not be combined to enter in multiple challenges.

## PLEASE NOTE

*The project options for the CIRT Design Competition may have been derived from actual competitions that are underway or have been recently completed. The information furnished has been edited and/or modified so as to meet the needs and form the basis of the CIRT competition.*

*If for any reason you believe a key piece of information is missing or you are unclear as to a specific reference in the information provided – please make an educated guess or assumption that would further your proposal (and simply indicate what that assumption was and why you made it). Please do not let a geographical reference or other individual piece of information prevent you from completing the CIRT design competition submission!*



# 2025 CIRT COMPETITION CHALLENGES

*“Talent hits a target no one else can hit. Genius hits a target no one else can see.”*

– Arthur Schopenhauer, 19<sup>th</sup> Century Philosopher



Image: Foster + Partners and Buro Happold / railwaypro.com

## MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION HUB

Proposals focused on a high-volume structure with multiple functions and audiences (e.g. commuter vs. tourist) are the basis of this challenge. Create/build or reconsider/redesign a major hub with the intent to serve multiple means of public transportation (e.g. trains, buses, airplanes, shipping, boating, etc.) to better serve modern users’ travel needs, business, habits, leisure, and other meaningful purposes. You may build an entirely new hub, with multiple stations and/or any rehab or remodel an existing (possibly iconic) site. Entries **MUST** fully rationalize their decisions and consider community response. Successful proposals will also consider audience types, volume variances, and thoughtfully integrate any necessary wayfinding cues within the building. Overall, the Hub should be both a highly functional and iconically designed asset for the chosen location. The key will be to explain the reasons for site selection, identify a cohesive vision for a long-term successful future through CONSTRUCTION related changes (the built environment, whether rehab/new/repurposed structures, or opening spaces, etc.). This is an ideas competition: proposals may be innovative, transformative, and challenging, **BUT *must also*** present viable ways to implement real, holistic change.

The team entries **must** demonstrate: (1) the precise aspects and rationale of your site selection, (2) how use of materials and construction solutions address the challenge, (3) balance of functionality and design to achieve the project goals, and (4) provide a cost estimate (per foot) to accomplish the needs in a realistic and doable way consistent with the resources/financial support likely available in the locale. [The proposal **MUST** also include the precise CONSTRUCTION timeline, steps, stages, and remedies for this challenge, with any demolition or other pre-retrofit work described and detailed].



Image: Cushing Terrell

## IDEAL SCHOOL

The goal of this challenge is to envision what design/construction solutions can be applied to transform, reimagine, or repurpose learning and common areas in a High School setting. The purpose is to enhance or stimulate education, as well as interactive social, community, and/or interpersonal time. The proposal should seek to improve, expand, make interchangeable/multipurpose or otherwise enliven the value and use of space/functionality **through design and construction elements**. This effort **MUST** consider the following use of space (can be distinct areas) to accommodate: (1) class instruction/labs, (2) study/down time, (3) food prep and consumption, (4) recreational or social space [where each can be accomplished without interfering with the other], and (5) health/fitness or sporting activities. Entries must demonstrate how **specific** steps or changes transform underutilized dated, dark, dirty, or otherwise unattractive classrooms and spaces (whether labs, cafeterias, lounges, library, or entrance hall, gyms, pools, stage areas) into inviting exciting and useful areas for students. **MUSTS** include: (1) site selection (why, where, how, etc.), (2) before and after depictions, (3) demolition, disruption, traffic/parking impacts, (4) construction timelines, steps, stages, and remedies for this challenge, etc., (5) budget, per square foot estimates. It's critical the entry be accomplished to meet the precise needs of this RFP in a **realistic** and doable way consistent with the resources/financial support likely available in the locale.





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## CARBON CAPTURE

This challenge addresses the emerging interest, viability, and application of carbon capture and storage (CCS). Essentially, the extracting and sequestering/capturing of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) that otherwise would be released into the atmosphere etc. and finding ways to inject/deposit it into geologic formations deep underground, into other useful products, or even into useful materials for the construction project itself. The goal is to **apply design and/or construction** means, methods, techniques, applications, approaches, materials, and finishes to accomplish substantial or meaningful amounts of carbon capture through the entry's solution to a built environment of your choosing. THE KEY element in the proposal must be an accepted (or used) measuring method to determine the (CO<sub>2</sub>) weight captured and then put it into a per 100-dollar amount (i.e. tons/\$100) for comparative purposes with other proposals. [Failure to provide such a universal per/dollar measurement will severely reduce the chances of success for the entry]. Success will also turn on fully explaining your approach(es), how they are innovative, creative, and achievable – both through the design aspect and the CONSTRUCTION process that will promote sustainability. As in the other options, the proposal must meet the precise needs of this RFP in a realistic and doable way consistent with the resources/financial support likely available in the locale; while providing a full understanding of the construction timelines, budget, and per square foot estimates. [Since all entries in this challenge will be using a common element (carbon capture) it is extremely important to show where your proposal stands out and contributes to the application or adoption of this goals].