

The Project

Background

NLA – London's Built Environment Community is a unique forum which brings together London's architecture, planning and development professionals, together with communities, developers and investors, to explore and promote ways of making London a better place for all. Through an annual programme of events, conferences & workshops, think tanks, site visits, exhibitions, awards and publications, the NLA showcases and promotes London as a hub of creative talent and a leading international centre of learning, creativity, development and growth. This helps to deliver the Mayor's priorities to stimulate regeneration and create new homes and jobs.

The London Festival of Architecture (LFA) is an annual city-wide celebration of architecture and architectural talent in London. With the theme of "voices" for 2025, it brings architects and communities together to examine how to make our city a better place. It highlights the unique pool of creative talent that London has to offer and promotes London as a leading international centre of learning and creativity, with a wide range of events including exhibitions, lectures, talks, bike rides, temporary structures and tours of historic buildings. The full programme for this year's London Festival of Architecture can be viewed [here](#).

Principal Partnership of NLA 2025/6:

Principal Partnership of the NLA provides an opportunity for the GLA to make a significant contribution to the following objectives of the NLA annual programme.

The proposal

- Contribute to London's profile as an international centre for excellence in the fields of architecture, planning and development by promoting the talent, output and success of these sectors, and help to create opportunities for these sectors to win business from domestic and overseas clients;
- Facilitate innovation, cross-fertilisation and testing of ideas, best practice and professional services through networking and learning opportunities;
- Spotlight, celebrate and communicate the talents and achievements of London professionals, thereby enhancing London's global reputation as a leader in these fields;
- Provide a platform for the architecture and planning sector to showcase the best of their work to a targeted local and international audience;
- Demonstrate commitment to improving the diversity of the built environment profession and to involving professionals from diverse backgrounds in all aspects of the programme;
- Support the Mayors Green New Deal and ambitions towards a Net Zero London by 2030
- Support the Mayor's ambitions to promote microbusinesses and SMEs across London and the work of the Anchor Institutions programme by providing a platform within the programme for a range of voices across microbusinesses, SMEs, community figures and key institutions.
- Bring together architects and built environment professionals to engage with setting the future agenda for London through debate and engagement in the issues currently affecting London, including housing, public realm, tall buildings and the densification needed to accommodate growth;
- Work with the principal funders including the GLA to facilitate high quality events across the capital and give high prominence to the sponsors on the NLA website and all relevant publicity materials.
- By meeting these objectives, the NLA may use the Mayor of London's logo to further promote the work they do across London's built environment community through NLA programming, the London Festival of Architecture, London Real Estate Forum and the New London Awards.

In line with these objectives, teams across the GLA can access the unique benefits associated with being a Principal Partner of the NLA, which include:

Key Programmes:

Future City Makers:

NLA's Future City Makers programme brings together built environment thought leaders to inspire young people to become city-makers. We want to engage them with creative careers in the built environment while also amplifying diverse voices across the industry to help shape a better and more inclusive City.

With access to over 600 schools across London and a partnership with the Harris Federation at 53 locations operating in areas of high socio-economic disadvantage, NLA is able to ensure that London's young talent has every opportunity to reach their full potential whilst also helping to fill the widening skills gap in the industry.

Working with our extensive network of built environment professionals, we offer young people a comprehensive learning experience, introducing them to the variety of career options available. From architecture, urban design and planning, construction, surveying, project managing, engineering and more, we want young people to have access to resources, careers information and mentoring so they can make informed decisions about their futures.

In April 2025 NLA launched a report "[Skills for Places](#)" which highlights the significance and value of the built environment industry and how we must all come together to demonstrate the skills and opportunities a career in our sector holds for young people and career changers. We brought together data and evidence on the current and emerging trends that are driving the growth of the sector. We explored the myriad of roles and skills required to create the places of tomorrow and the many ladders of opportunity needed to equip young people with the essential skills to flourish in the industry.

Following on from this report we are in the process of undertaking a supplementary workstream, with colleagues in the GLA economics team to calculate the GVA of the built environment to the London economy to support the GLA's skills team, alongside LSE and key large-scale employers across the industry.

We work directly with schools to provide a toolkit of resources, workshops and lectures in line with the curriculum from inspiring speakers, site visits to organisations who are actively seeking new talent for their recruitment pipeline, matching service for work experience and industrial placements, and access to apply for apprenticeships and other earn-while-you-learn programmes.

Diverse Leaders:

Diverse Leaders celebrates and supports diversity and inclusion in the built environment industry, championing for a representative sector and to overcome chronic discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, age and socio-economic background to create a strengthened, resilient and representative workforce.

57 organisations are now signed up to the Diverse Leaders Pledge. Which invites signees to commit to measurable goals over the coming years that we believe will catalyse change, enabling engagement, action and progress around diversity and inclusion within the workplace, fostering collaboration across the built environment industry.

Community Programme and Public Programme:

NLA's dedicated community programme brings together those most engaged in our communities to discuss, define, and promote best practice in working with residents as active and participatory agents in shaping the city. This programme takes an active role in integrating these specialists and organisations across the entire NLA programme, through our Expert Panels, ensuring this crucial perspective remains part of the discussion.

Furthermore, NLA Think Tanks bring together community experts with public and private sector voices to address the challenges in engagement, assessing the changing nature of consultation and the increasing use of digital tools, as well as the issues exacerbated by COVID-19 and the long-term barriers to delivering meaningful places through extensive community engagement and collaboration.

Our newly launched public programme aims to engage members of the public more broadly around key topics across the built environment through walking tours, model talks and panel discussions on themes such as community consultation, biodiversity and safety of women, girls and gender diverse individuals. This programme sits alongside our other public outputs like the London Festival of Architecture.

Intelligence

Alignment with key pieces of research - below are the two upcoming research pieces for the remainder of 2025, as well as the topics of exploration for 2026.

Adaptive Reuse – launching July 2025

NLA is exploring the adaptive reuse of commercial buildings to meet the evolving needs of London's office market. With 23% of operational carbon emissions stemming from non-domestic buildings, retrofitting offers a sustainable alternative to new builds.

As the UK aims for net zero, commercial retrofits are key to reducing carbon footprints, with 70% of UK non-residential stock predating 2000. However, challenges remain, such as balancing operational and embodied carbon, addressing the VAT discrepancy between new builds and retrofits, and securing financing. How can we integrate sustainability while meeting community needs and regulations?

NLA seeks examples from recent years, both locally and internationally, where adaptive reuse has breathed new life into existing buildings.

Public Housing – launching October 2025

NLA is exploring how innovative housing solutions can address the new government's ambitious housing targets. Central to this effort is the dual challenge of creating affordable new homes while retrofitting existing public housing to meet net-zero carbon goals. How can we balance sustainability with affordability, ensuring housing supports London's equity and prosperity?

Building on past NLA research, a key area of focus is the regeneration of public housing estates. How can local authorities and development partners retrofit these estates at scale, leveraging new funding opportunities to improve energy efficiency and living conditions?

We seek practical solutions, that at pace and price, transform both old and new housing into sustainable key infrastructure, supporting London's transition to a greener, more inclusive future.

Powerful Partnerships – launching April 2026

From Great Estates and Business Improvement Districts to ambitious Community Improvement Districts and net zero neighbourhoods, these place-based collaborations are driving London's prosperity. How are these partnerships evolving to meet the city's growing demands for sustainable, equitable, and thriving places?

How can these partnerships prioritise the long-term vitality of both public and private spaces? How can cross-sector collaborations unlock new funding models and bring about lasting improvements in urban design, infrastructure, and sustainability?

We aim to uncover actionable insights into how public-private partnerships can create thriving, resilient communities that foster social, environmental, and economic prosperity, ensuring a better future for all Londoners.

London; Global Skills Hub – launching July 2026

NLA is examining London's role as a global skills hub for the built environment. Central to this effort is understanding London's resilience and adaptability in the face of global political changes, including Brexit and the leadership of a new government. How can London's built environment community sustain its creative leadership while amplifying its contribution to the UK economy and influencing urban development worldwide?

Building on past NLA research, this study will focus on repositioning the built environment industry, showcasing its significant economic impact. How can London's unique expertise in architecture, construction, and real estate shape global cities and cement its status as a global skills hub?

We seek actionable strategies that leverage London's built environment expertise to shape the world cities of tomorrow.

Expert Panels:

Minimum two GLA representatives*, as part of this round of experts, on key panels aligned with priorities and goals – including, representation on the New London Sounding Board and at least 2x programme panels.

*Currently the GLA is represented across Culture, Healthcare, High Streets, Housing, Industrial & Logistics, Innovation Districts, Net Zero, Retrofit & Conservation and Work.

Deliverables and Metrics:

Quarterly meetings with Helen Simpson, Gemma Bradshaw and Hannah Lester and NLA's Head of Strategic Partnerships and other team members where relevant to discuss forward-plan calendar, areas of priority and share metrics of key deliverables.

Twice-yearly meetings between NLA Chief Exec (Nick McKeogh) and Good Growth Executive Director (Phil Graham).

Where relevant, twice yearly meeting between NLA Chief Exec and Directors (Nick McKeogh, Catherine Staniland, Benjamin O'Connor) and Good Growth Team (Louise Duggan, Lisa Fairmaner, Sarah Considine, Peter Kemp and other colleagues where relevant). Separate twice yearly session with Housing & Land senior team.

Annual briefing session at the London Centre with NLA's Head of Strategic Partnership and Chief Executive to present how GLA teams can make the most of their membership.

Network:

Invitations to high level networking events including – New London Awards Lunch, LFA Patrons Dinner, LREF VIP Reception and London Leaders Network events that bring all Champion & Principal Partner members together with national, regional and local policy makers.

Free project submissions to our insight study showcases and two free case studies per year. Discounted rate for further case studies.

Free gallery hire for an evening event/reception, in addition to hosting one network meeting for the Good Growth by Design programme with the Mayor's Design Advocates (catering and security costs apply) at the London Centre, as well appropriate pop-up venues throughout the year (to be agreed with NLA in advance) Further 20% discount on additional venue hire.

Digital NLQ magazine subscription

Access to CPD accredited webinars (Events mailer sent every Tuesday)

Free access to Half Day Conferences, Summits and On Location events throughout the year

Discounts on all additional event tickets

Unlimited Personal Members

Regular members newsletter (sent every Wednesday)

Profile:

Brand and logo placement as a Principal Partner across all NLA content, communications & media channels. Branded against all NLA research outputs as a Principal Partner.

GLA Involvement in relevant NLA research programmes and publications to be agreed at quarterly meetings. Speaking and editorial opportunities across the New London Programme and NLA communication channels.

Continuation of the 'Mayor's Prize' within the New London Awards including GLA table at the New London Awards Lunch. The theme for 2025 is **Good placemaking at density**.

This year the Mayor's Award will recognise schemes that demonstrate innovative design-led optimisation of a site or area, achieving exemplary sense of place rooted in quality, liveability, and sustainability while championing local character and identity. The Award particularly welcomes entries that demonstrate development that supports a greener London, through nature recovery, urban greening, biodiversity, and access to nature.

Grant Funding of the London Festival of Architecture 2025:

Grant funding of the London Festival of Architecture, provides an opportunity for the GLA to make a significant contribution to the following objectives of the world's leading architecture festival, helping it to reach more Londoners and create a platform for emerging design talent.

The Proposal:

- Promoting London as the unrivalled global capital city for modern and historic architecture, as well as the practice and study of architecture.
- Providing the major annual event for London's architecture community to engage with public audiences. Through this engaging the public in the conversation about architecture and our city and demonstrating commitment to diversity in the built environment professions.
- Enabling the LFA to be a time for the profession to celebrate its work and reflect on new ways of working and develop new ideas to strengthen the industry.
- Engaging new organisations and individuals to participate in the festival – thereby helping them have a voice in the discussion about architecture and our city
- Upskilling new and existing organisations to allow them to stage better and more effective events as part of the LFA – thus improving the overall quality of festival events
- Promoting diversity within the architecture profession – including through campaigns including The Elephant Campaign, work with ArchitectureLGBT+ and Pride; and by ensuring speaker panels and other activities within the festival reflect the diversity of London.
- Providing opportunities for emerging architectural talent to showcase their work – particularly through LFA competitions.
- Delivering a range of public realm improvements across London throughout the year – for example Thessaly Road with Wandsworth Council, Pews and Perches with The Royal Docks Team, New Growth on Exhibition Road with Discover South Kensington and Pop Up Bike Parking with Network Rail – improving the quality of Londoners' built environment.
- Providing an opportunity for London Boroughs to test new ideas during the festival
- Providing a global stage for London based architects to showcase their work to a global audience – helping to promote their export services to overseas markets.

Deliverables and Metrics:

Quarterly meetings with LFA's Festival Director and a member of the senior LFA team where key milestones and areas of priority for the Good Growth Agenda can be shared.

GLA Officers and Mayor's Design Advocates will make up part of competition judging panels to keep alignment with the Mayor's priorities across the Festival.

As part of this, the LFA team will produce a report, annually at the end of the Festival period that will be shared with the GLA team, to outline and showcase the achievements and impact of that year's festival.

Additional Benefits:

- Feature the 'Supported by Mayor of London' logo on the LFA website, festival newsletters, in relevant press releases and festival merchandise.
- The festival will work with nominated mayoral representatives to promote current mayoral agenda through festival activities.
- Fix one meeting per quarter with Director of LFA and Senior GLA Officer.

- Receive a report detailing the outcomes of the Festival and its impact. Alongside the opportunity to provide a foreword for this.
- Continue to provide a platform for the Mayor, Deputy Mayors or key GLA spokespeople to address the profession at VIP LFA events.
- Identifying key PR moments for a contribution from the GLA where relevant, included but not limited to the Festival launch event, Patron's Dinner and Festival closing event.
- The opportunity to 'kite-mark' one element of the LFA programme that are specifically aligned with the Mayor's Good Growth agenda and the Good Growth by Design programme.
- The opportunity for GLA Officers to contribute to appropriate panel discussions and events organised during the festival.
- The opportunity for GLA Officers to provide thought leadership and vital insight to shape the Festival's content and direction - e.g. on our website Views Pages.
- The opportunity for GLA Officers and or Mayor's Design Advocates to join LFA competition judging panels.