



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Release: immediate

The Welfare Association receives Conceptual Proposals from five Architects to masterplan and design the Palestinian Museum in Birzeit in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Through an extensive selection process The Welfare Association is intending to appoint Architects to masterplan and design the Palestinian Museum which will be located in Birzeit in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The selected Architects will be responsible for Masterplanning a phased development of the Palestinian Museum on a very important site within the overall campus of Birzeit University, near to Ramallah.

The selection process commenced in June 2011 with over 40 architects submitting expressions of interest in the project. 5 Architects were shortlisted and invited to prepare initial conceptual and technical submissions. Presentations were made on 2 and 3 December in London by the 5 Architects; *Consolidated Consultants* from Amman Jordan, *Edward Cullinan Architects* from London, *Henning Larsen* from Copenhagen, *Heneghan Peng* from Dublin and *Moriyama & Teshima* from Toronto.

A decision on the appointment is expected to be made within the next two weeks.

The Palestinian Museum will be designed to be constructed in 2 phases with the first phase of 2,500 m² to be completed by 2014. The construction budget for the first Phase will be approximately US\$8 million. The second phase will be in the order of 5,000 m² and will be developed following the opening of Phase 1.

The Palestinian Museum will be a unique cultural project and is being developed to become the primary and most authoritative source of knowledge and new thinking about Palestinian history, culture and contemporary life. Such a space does not currently exist. The Museum is conceived as a thematic rather than simply a narrative museum, in which many different aspects of Palestinian history and culture will be explored in innovative and revealing ways, creating debate and discussion about both past and contemporary themes.

The Palestinian Museum project has been in gestation for over a decade and has gone through a number of different stages of debate, thinking and rethinking. After a great deal of internal discussion and external consultation, the Welfare Association is now totally confident that the overall strategy and concept direction allow for the Palestinian Museum to be built.

Because of the nature of the Palestinian reality, where a majority of Palestinians are today living outside historic Palestine (i.e. Israel and the Occupied Territories); and because of the barriers and checkpoints erected by Israel which prevent the freedom of movement of Palestinians living under occupation (and prevent most Palestinians in the Diaspora from even entering any part of their country), the Museum is conceived as a hub which, in addition to catering to the population in the West Bank, will also serve a network of branches and associated centres, sharing with them information, research, web-based material and touring exhibitions, as well as human resources and expertise.



As any other museum in the world, the Palestinian Museum will hope to attract the largest possible number of visitors. Realistically, however, given the restrictions that exist for Palestinians, it can only hope to physically serve West Bank Palestinians in the near future and of course international visitors (Palestinians or non-Palestinians with Israeli citizenship are legally forbidden by Israel from entering Area A in the Occupied Territories, where this museum will be built). It will have an extensive outreach programme and will also benefit from its proximity to Birzeit University, north of Ramallah, which generously gave the project 40,000 sq metres of land on a very long lease.

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Notes to Editors...

Welfare Association

The Welfare Association is a leading Palestinian non-governmental development organization, dedicated to making a distinguished contribution toward furthering the progress of the Palestinians, preserving their heritage and identity, supporting their living culture and building civil society. It aims to achieve these goals by methodically identifying Palestinian needs and priorities and establishing sound mechanisms to maximize benefits from the available funding resources."

Welfare Association is a private, non-profit association established in 1983 to support Palestinian society in sustainable development. WA beneficiaries are the more than 4 million Palestinians who are served by Palestinian non-governmental organizations, community institutions and charitable organizations in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Galilee, Jaffa, Akka, Nazareth and Naqab, as well as in refugee camps in Lebanon. WA works by strengthening local organizations, and assisting them in improving their services to the community and in promoting Palestinian culture, heritage and identity.

<http://welfare-association.org/en>

The Palestinian Museum Selection Process

The Architectural selection process was organised by Projacs of Kuwait and Cultural Innovations from London. Projacs are providing Project Management services for the Palestinian Museum. Cultural Innovations are Museological and Strategic Advisers and have worked for 2 years with the Welfare Association to develop the Strategic Plan and Design Briefs which are the basis for the Palestinian Museum's development.

www.projacs.com

www.culturalinnovations.com



Team Credits:

Architect

Landscape Designer
Structural Engineer
Services Engineer
Local Palestinian Partner

Architect

Landscape Designer
Structural Engineer
Services Engineer
Local Palestinian Partner

Architect

Landscape Designer
Horticulturalist
Structural Engineer
Services Engineer
Local Palestinian Partner

Architect

Landscape Designer
Structural Engineer
Services Engineer
Local Palestinian Partner

Architect

Landscape Designer
Structural Engineer
Services Engineer
Local Palestinian Partner

Consolidated Consultants

Consolidated Consultants
Consolidated Consultants
Consolidated Consultants
Petra Mimar

Edward Cullinan Architects

Gross Max
Buro Happold
Buro Happold
Amara Architects

Heneghan Peng

Heneghan Peng
Lara Zureikat
Arup
Arup
Petra Mimar

Henning Larsen

Henning Larsen
Buro Happold
Buro Happold
Petra Mimar

Moriyama & Teshima

Moriyama & Teshima
Halcrow Yolles
Halcrow Yolles
Saffarini & Associates