

SOM
FOUNDATION

2026
CHINA
FELLOWSHIP

China Fellowship **2026**

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SOM FOUNDATION

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1. Fellowship

The \$15,000 China Fellowship is awarded annually to one student in the last two years of either an undergraduate or graduate program in architecture, landscape architecture, interior architecture, or urban design in the People's Republic of China to conduct independent travel and research that contributes to the SOM Foundation's current topic. The China Fellowship was created in 2006 to support emerging design leaders to broaden their education and contribute to their future professional and academic careers.

2. Topic: Exploring the Potential of Mobility Corridors

This year's topic aims to explore how every scale of movement infrastructure shapes our built environment. How might new approaches to mobility corridors provide sustainable growth, from improving how people and goods move from place to place to supporting the ecosystems, communities, and activities that surround them? Ultimately, how can existing or proposed interconnected systems help define the future of our cities?

3. Eligibility

Applicant must be an undergraduate or graduate student in the last two years of a professionally accredited degree program in architecture, landscape architecture, interior architecture, or urban design in the People's Republic of China. Chinese citizenship is not required. Students enrolled at universities in the People's Republic of China who are currently participating in a study abroad program outside of the country are eligible for the award. Students from China who are enrolled at universities outside the People's Republic of China are not eligible for the award. Applicant must intend to obtain a professionally accredited degree and enter the professional practice of architecture, landscape architecture, interior architecture, or urban design.

4. Application Requirements

Proposal

- Each applicant should develop a proposal that explains how their research relates to this year's topic, their interests and learning objectives, and how they and the profession may benefit from their research.
- The proposal should range between 750 and 1,250 words.
- A short abstract (no more than 50 words) should be included before the proposal.
- The proposal must include a title as well as appropriate labeling and footnoting as necessary.
- The proposal should include additional images that support the thesis.
- The applicant is encouraged to work with an advisor to develop the proposal; however, work must be entirely the applicant's own.
- Nothing that identifies the applicant's name, gender, race, creed, advisor, or university may be included in the proposal.

Travel Itinerary

- The itinerary should include city(ies) and sites the applicant intends to document along with the estimated dates of travel. The travel itinerary should support the applicant's proposal.
- The travel can take place inside and/or outside of the People's Republic of China and must be a minimum of three weeks' duration.
- The applicant is encouraged to work with an advisor to develop the itinerary; however, work must be entirely the applicant's own.
- Nothing that identifies the applicant's name, gender, race, creed, advisor, or university may be included in the travel itinerary.

Preliminary Budget

- The preliminary budget should provide itemized use of the fellowship funds (e.g., travel, lodging, etc.).
- Nothing that identifies the applicant's name, gender, race, creed, advisor, or university may be included in the preliminary budget.

Portfolio

- The portfolio should include work that is the applicant's own, completed at the university where the applicant is enrolled, and/or work prepared for other design competitions. Given the collaborative nature of most university programs, group work is allowed. However, it should be used sparingly. The applicant's role in the group project must be clearly explained in the portfolio.
- Work that was prepared in a professional office should not be included in the portfolio.
- The portfolio can include text in Simplified Chinese. English translations are welcome but are not required.
- Nothing that identifies the applicant's name, gender, race, creed, advisor, or university may be included in the portfolio.

Language

- Applications must be submitted in English.

5. Application Format

- Single PDF format
- A4, either portrait or landscape orientation
- 18 pages maximum
- 25 MB maximum

6. Application Deadline

Submit information via the application page form no later than **Friday, April 24, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. CDT**. Applications received after that time will not be considered.

You should receive an email confirming the information you submitted. If not, please contact us at info@somfoundation.com.

7. Jury

This year's jury will be led by **Inho Rhee**, Design Principal, SOM, Shanghai, and will include:

- **Chen Chen** Founding Principal, reMIX, Beijing
- **Michel Hsiung** General Manager, Shui On Management Limited, Shanghai
- **Sun Yimin** Professor and Academic Leader, School of Architecture at South China University of Technology, Guangzhou
- **Tang Shuoning** Chairman and Chief Architect, Tongji Architectural Design & Research Institute (Group) Co., Ltd.; Professor, Tongji University, Shanghai

The SOM Foundation reserves the right to choose not to award, to co-award, or to split the prize as the jury deems appropriate.

8. Notification of Award

Winner will be notified no later than Friday, June 5, 2026.

9. Recipient Responsibilities

By accepting the award, the recipient agrees to:

- provide progress reports via email to the SOM Foundation Executive Director.
- complete their travel and research within eighteen months of receiving the award, or within an agreed-upon time, depending on circumstances.
- forfeit all fellowship money to the SOM Foundation in the event that travel and research are not completed within eighteen months, unless prior written approval is received from the SOM Foundation Executive Director.
- file a final report within four months after completing their travel and research.

Any changes to the proposal, including the itinerary and budget allocation, need to be submitted in writing and approved by the SOM Foundation.

10. Copyright

The winning application will become part of the SOM Foundation's archive. The SOM Foundation reserves the right to use the winning application—and the recipient's monthly progress reports and final report—or any portion of them in press releases, presentations, exhibits, history books, and similar publications, as well as for public access for student and educational purposes in all media, including online. Author will retain the copyright of their work.