

*Think  
Differently  
About  
Design*

## Grand Station Designs

02

### Awards

There is one award available for this brief.

#### RSA Fellows' Award of £2,000

The cash award for this brief is supported by RSA Fellows' legacy funds to the RSA. The judging panel may decide on more than one winner and will allocate the awards accordingly. In addition, the judging panel may award commendations.

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#### Brief

Design a way to reinvigorate and/or repurpose an ageing commuter train station building, utilising its existing structures and resources.

#### Background

- Commuters are people who travel to work on a regular basis. This brief is focused on the many ageing commuter train stations in middle to outer suburbs, commuter towns, and other locations inhabited by large numbers of commuters and their families.
- In the UK, these commuter stations are used by millions of passengers every day and provide a backdrop to everyday life. Stations are gateways to both the UK's urban economic hubs and the local areas they serve and this civic function impacts passenger satisfaction and quality of life.
- In recent years many major urban train stations in the UK have undergone massive refurbishment, becoming beacons of delightful design and thriving hubs for passengers and concourse businesses. But there are over 2,500 commuter train stations in the UK which have ageing buildings that are perceived as low priority for major investment.
- Stations serving commuters are often a key landmark, yet appear utilitarian and dated. How can the ambience and identity of these public spaces be developed to engender a sense of civic pride and community, and to encourage investment in the local area?
- Whilst commuter train stations are an essential part of UK transport infrastructure, footfall varies hugely at different points during the day and at different times of the week. During peak travel hours stations can be extremely busy (typically 7-9:15 am and 4:15-6:15 pm Monday to Friday, although this can vary), but during off-peak times they are often quiet, making them an underutilised asset much of the time.
- Typically, these stations have a booking office with a waiting room. Some have public toilet provisions, but this isn't present at all stations. A limited amount of stations also offer some retail space for small or medium enterprises – usually cafés or office space.
- There is powerful potential in ensuring that design innovation extends to these buildings and their products and services. Working within the existing building structures, how

#### How this brief will be judged

- 1 Social and environmental benefit
- 2 Research and insights
- 3 Design thinking
- 4 Commercial awareness
- 5 Execution
- 6 Magic

Please see the next page for further details

might we revive these stations, and turn them into inspiring assets that add value to the people and communities they serve?

#### How should you approach this brief?

- We want you to explore innovative ways to reinvigorate and even repurpose commuter train stations, whilst ensuring they still maintain their core station function and cater for passenger needs. Your solution could be spatial/environmental, service focused, or a physical product – we are not looking for purely digital platforms or standalone apps.
  - This brief asks you to investigate an ageing commuter train station, or multiple stations, that is currently in use anywhere in the UK or beyond (see the online toolkit for some examples of blueprints of commuter train stations in the UK). How could the station space be utilised in new ways that complement the passenger experience? Or how might the station bring value to others (non-passengers) in the community? Consider the local context, but also the potential to scale your solution to other areas.
  - We are looking for surprising design solutions that make clever use of existing station environments, use a resource-efficient approach to enhance them, and/or bring in new collaborations (for example with community businesses or groups). We are not looking for major refurbishment proposals that would require large scale investment.
  - You can focus on reinvigorating one aspect of a commuter train station (environmental performance, inclusive design etc), or you may choose to develop a broader proposal focusing on the holistic design identity, environmental design, or even a way of repurposing the station that extends its use and/or enables it to flexibly adapt to be used in different ways during peak and off-peak hours.
  - Wherever you turn your focus, consider the social, economic and environmental value of the area and the opportunities this presents. You could draw inspiration from analogous contexts – what other spaces are used innovatively and flexibly, generating value for core users and others?
- (continued...)

Aug 2018  
Briefs launch  
+ register your  
interest online

14 Jan 2019  
Competition  
opens

13 Feb 2019  
'Early bird'  
submission  
deadline (£25)

13 Mar 2019  
Final submission  
deadline (£35)

20 Mar 2019  
Judging begins:  
shortlisting and  
interviews

May 2019  
Winners  
announced

For the purposes of illustration only, viable responses could include:

- An innovative redesign of one aspect of the physical structure, reusing existing materials and resources to inspire and delight station users.
- An environmental solution that improves well-being and enhances the local area.
- A physical product that transforms the passenger experience at the station.
- A pioneering service operating out of the station building that brings value to commuters and/or others in the community.

... and many more are possible.

### Judging criteria

There are 6 criteria that your entry will be judged against – make sure that your submission materials demonstrate that your solution meets these criteria:

- 1 Social and environmental benefit – how does your solution benefit society and/or the environment?
- 2 Research and insights – how did you investigate this issue? What were your key insights?
- 3 Design thinking – how did your research and insights inform your solution? How did you develop, test, iterate and refine your concept? Demonstrate the journey you've been through to the end result.
- 4 Commercial awareness – does it make sense from a financial point of view? What is unique about your solution compared to other interventions? Who would need to pay for, deliver or support your proposal in order for it to succeed?
- 5 Execution – we are looking for a design solution that feels pleasing and well resolved.
- 6 Magic – we want to see a bit of 'magic' – a surprising or lateral design solution that delights.

### Submission requirements

All entries must be submitted through our online entry system, accessed via [www.thersa.org/sda](http://www.thersa.org/sda)

If you are unable to submit online, please contact us by email at [sdaenquiries@rsa.org.uk](mailto:sdaenquiries@rsa.org.uk)

As you prepare your submission, please ensure that:

- You do NOT include your name, university/college or other identifying marks anywhere on your submission.
- None of your PDF submission files exceed 10MB – this is the maximum size for each individual file/board when you submit online.

The submission requirements are:

- **1 x A3 PDF Hero Image, with project title and 1 sentence description**

A singular 'poster image' that conveys the essence of your project, and includes your project title plus a 1 sentence description. For example: '*Bare Technology: a product and service design solution to convert old computers (e-waste) into simpler, more straightforward, accessible computers for older people*'. Your hero image should aim to bring your concept to life – make sure it is vibrant and engaging.

- **1 x A3 Written Summary**

A single A3 PDF page that summarises your big idea using the following format:

- **Problem (50 words max)**

What is the specific problem you identified within the brief topic? Who experiences this problem, and how does it impact them?

- **Process (75 words max)**

How did you investigate this issue – what were your key insights? What journey did you go through to get to your final solution?

- **Solution (50 words max)**

What is your proposed solution? How will it solve the problem?

- **4 x A3 PDF Boards Outlining Your Proposal**

4 pages describing your proposal and demonstrating that you have met the 6 judging criteria. Each board should include a heading. It is important that you number each board in the top right hand corner, in the order you want them viewed by the judges.

- **5 x A3 PDF Pages of Supporting Material**

Up to 5 A3 pages of additional material illustrating your development process – this could include scanned pages of your sketchbook or computer modelling (if applicable).

- **Optional YouTube/Vimeo + website links**

Please note that we cannot guarantee supporting films and websites will be viewed at the shortlisting stage. If you have created digital materials, we recommend referencing them (for example by including labelled film stills or website screen grabs) in your 4 main PDF boards.

### Partner information

#### Network Rail

Network Rail own, operate and develop Britain's railway infrastructure. Part of that infrastructure comprises 20 of the UK's largest stations while all the other, over 2,500, are managed by the train operating companies. Every day, more than 4.6 million journeys are made in the UK. People depend on Britain's railway for their daily commute, to visit friends and loved ones and to get them home safe every day. Our role is to deliver a safe and reliable railway, so we carefully manage and deliver thousands of projects every year that form part of the multi-billion pound Railway Upgrade Plan, to grow and expand the nation's railway network to respond to the tremendous growth and demand the railway has experienced – a doubling of passenger journeys over the past 20 years.

We are building a better railway for a better Britain.

Brief devised by Network Rail, and developed by the RSA team in collaboration with Anthony Dewar, Professional Head Buildings and Architecture at Network Rail, and Richard Kinsella, Route Asset Manager at Network Rail.

### Key dates

**Aug 2018** – Briefs launch  
+ register your interest online

**Mon 14 Jan 2019** – Competition opens for submissions via [www.thersa.org/sda](http://www.thersa.org/sda)

**Wed 13 Feb 2019, 4 pm GMT**

– Deadline for 'Early bird' submission at reduced entry fee of £25

**Wed 13 Mar 2019, 4 pm GMT**

– Final deadline for online registration + submission (£35 entry fee)

**Wed 20 Mar 2019**

– Judging begins (2 stages: shortlisting + interviews with finalists)

**May 2019** – Winners announced

**Jun 2019** – Awards Ceremony