

Barcelona will host the UIA Congress and will be World Capital of Architecture in 2026

- **Barcelona's candidature has won with 147 votes over Beijing's in the General Assembly of the International Union of Architects, held in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil).**
- **The city of Barcelona will once again be the international epicentre of architecture thirty years later.**
- **This election represents a great opportunity to strengthen the role of the city of Barcelona, Catalonia and Spain as centres of production and thought of contemporary architecture and urban design, deepening their capacity to transform and improve people's lives.**

Barcelona, 28th July 2021 – Barcelona will host the Congress of the International Union of Architects (UIA) and will be the UIA-UNESCO World Capital of Architecture in 2026. This was decided during the General Assembly of the UIA, in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), where the candidacy of the city of Barcelona prevailed, with 147 votes, over that of Beijing, which obtained 129. Barcelona's nomination has been promoted by the Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda, the Generalitat of Catalonia, Barcelona's City Council, the Higher Council of the Orders of Architects of Spain in Spain (CSCAE) and the Architects' Association of Catalonia (COAC). Due to the restrictions derived from the Covid19 pandemic, the election was carried out online based on a video that included the social and cultural values of the city's architecture.

With its designation, Barcelona will once again be the world epicenter of architecture thirty years after hosting another UIA congress, which was then titled "Present and Future: Architecture in Cities," and was held with resounding public success and international impact.

The celebration in Barcelona of the most important architecture event in the sector means a great opportunity to strengthen the role of the city of Barcelona, Catalonia and Spain as centers of production and thought of contemporary architecture and urban design, delving into their capacity to transform and improve people's lives, and will serve to highlight the role of architecture and urban planning in the configuration of a new city model that responds to contemporary challenges.

Together with the UIA Congress, coordinated by COAC with the support of CSCAE, a multitude of multidisciplinary cultural activities will be held in Barcelona throughout the year 2026, in which other countries will collaborate with the aim of conveying to society as a whole the importance and value of architecture and urban planning. By doing so, Barcelona will position itself as a cultural, social and economic reference.

A congress to test the future

Barcelona is recognized throughout the world for its architecture. It is a diverse, cosmopolitan, modern city, inclusive of ideas and cultures. The congress to be held in

2026 wants to appeal precisely to the values of architecture and urban planning as factors for quality of life, well-being and a sense of social and cultural belonging, and the need to make them extensible and relevant to other countries, as a transformative tool for social change to move towards the cities of the future.

With the motto ***One today, one tomorrow***, the UIA World Congress in Barcelona will take as an example the relationship between the city and its architecture to debate a viable and sustainable future. An analysis of the current social, environmental and economic context that helps to locate the main challenges of architecture and define the instruments to achieve them.

An international congress with more than 70 years of history

The UIA congresses have been held since 1948 and, on each occasion, their objective is to address the challenges that society faces, from the perspective of the rigorous knowledge provided by architectural professionals.

In the race towards the designation of Barcelona as the venue for the UIA World Congress and UIA-Unesco World Capital of Architecture, on January 25, 2019, the City Council expressed, through an institutional declaration, its willingness to present the candidacy for the city to become UNESCO's World Capital of Architecture in 2026, a designation that is inextricably linked to the celebration of the UIA World Congress of Architects. As representative of Spain before the International Union of Architects, CSCAE formally submitted the proposal and, from that moment on, Barcelona City Council, COAC and CSCAE have worked together to present the application file and the candidacy's final dossier.

In January 2020, Barcelona was officially named by the UIA as a candidate city with only one rival, the Chinese city of Beijing.