

UNI

Visionary

Designing new age schools for blind students.



Fig: 1 – A world of the challenge for the specially-abled – An illustration

Premise

The dawn of **new-age progressive schools** was started around the **1900s** by John Dewey as a movement of bringing up kids in lab-like schools where they **learn by doing**. The model **helped break the stereotypes** of traditional **conservative methods of education** which belief in teaching through books and preset lessons.

But with passing time, the curiosity of children is far by leaps and bounds. Questions raised in the classes today are far more expansive as a generation compared to previous centuries. From being students following a certain curriculum, their rigour is challenging every dimension of learning. **These times push for new means to learn constantly, no matter what the subject is.**

This becomes a privilege for schools that have people who are able and can be provided such exploratory means of teaching.

But children who are differently/specially-abled and the facilities available to them are never pushed so far – nor even looked at in the same light.



Fig: 2 – The Blind School: Pioneering People and Places– Credits

Evolution

School for the blind has been around for a while in various informal to retrofitted scenarios. The first formal educational institute was established in **1795**.

Before formally schooling blind children, only asylums were sought for these kids as the civilization did not know how to handle them. These schools had bare minimum braille scripts that only taught them manual crafts and menial work at large.

Today a lot of these blind children go to the same schools in their neighbourhoods that abled kids go to and are assisted by special faculties but still have the same environment and means.

The design attention that goes into such spaces is fairly limited to the users they are catering to.

What if we could bring equal curiosity and attention to the issue to this uncharted territory of barrier-free design? How would be a tailor-made school for the blind be? How would the open/liberal values of today imbibe into the built fabric of these educational institutions?



Fig: 3 – Education for the blind can be more than braille – An illustration

Brief

Designing learning spaces for children with low or no sight requires a lot more attention than designing for abled kids.

Can there be various models for implementing such education environments that multiply their potential? Can design help us identify modules/methods of upgrading existing schools for differently-abled teaching? Can we implement a new kind of pedagogy for the users in consideration?

The challenge here is to design a school for the blind that engages – promotes - teaches almost as good as a general school for the abled children.

Taking into account the parallels between these learning environments can't be equal, but exercise looks more towards raising the bar than to meet it at equal capacity. The design must also focus on methods to mentally stimulate the kids through other sensory ways.

Objectives

There are various forms of learning a child deserves and should learn, but this varies from place to place. In this challenge, we anchor this on a very fundamental level of universal learning and build it from there onwards. The design process can also look at picking a part of K-12 education to include in their learning framework. The choice or the framework of education method is up to the participants. While picking an existing education method, explain the reason and your adaptation based on it.

Physical: How the body can be trained for wellness using various activities. How children can be taught what's good to eat, etc.?

Mental: How traditional learning can be translated into more fun/experiential ways of developing reasoning?

World: How can children discover their connection to the planet, nature, culture and the world around them?

Creativity: How can a child explore learning by doing things and exploring how things work by doing?

Art forms: How can a child explore various forms of art forms.
Eg. Dance, Music, Painting, etc.

Evolution: How these forms of teaching will constantly evolve with time considering the larger span of time.

Site

The site for this concept school is located in the Krylatskoye district in Moscow, Russia. It is a green neighbourhood with bustling establishments around it. With two adjacent streets running next to the triangular site, the site has very good accessibility from the road. River Moskva is right next to the site in the north direction.

Site area – **19,788** sqm

Max. FAR – **1**

Ground coverage - 40%

Height restrictions - 15 m

Coordinates - 55°46'14.1"N 37°25'42.0"E



Fig: 4 – Site Plan

User Profile

Children (Suggested): Age group of 5yrs - 12yrs - (150 - 200 children)
(Expandable to 400).

Educators: 20 years and above (Quantity on designer's research)

Managers: 4-5 managers including principals and supervisors.

Support: 5-7 support personnel or more depending on design.

Services: 5-15 service personnel or more depending on design.

Externals: Any visiting staff or parents for events or daily visits.

How to submit?

Read all the competition rules and details from the side bar, and hit **register**. You can pay the entry fee and book your registration right away. The additional resources directly unlock as soon as you register on your dashboard. Once you are ready with your project - begin uploading from the dashboard and follow this tutorial to submit. You can add your team members to your project while submitting.

Discover the full submission tutorial here: <https://to.uni.xyz/uploadtutorial>

Submission Requirements

You have to deliver an architectural design outcome on the following site, based on the given outlines.

1. Recommended number of sheets/presentation images/boards:
3 (Three) of size [2800px x 3500px] in portrait digital format (JPEG only).
2. Minimum 3 (Three) & No maximum sheet limit. Each image should be less than 15MB. (Do not submit PNG format)
3. Minimum requisite submission are sheets/boards + Cover image containing:
 - a. Site plan
 - b. 1 x Key concept section
 - c. 3D views x 4
 - d. Additional cover image of 2000px x 1000px
 - e. Write an article/story in the Journal section# of the project (of about 700-1000 words) answering the questions given in the guide pdf.

#Journal Section appears midway in the project submission portal. More instructions in the additional resources.

Additional Resources

This competition contains additional resources that contains a set of files useful to complete the competition submission. This folder is made available on your profile dashboard automatically as soon as you register.

This additional resource folder of this competition contains:

Submission Format files in PSD | AI | InDD & Guide to Journal Section + Questions, CAD file of the site plan, High Resolution Site Maps and Site images .

Learn more on: <https://uni.xyz/competitions/visionary/info/about>

Base Rules

- + The competitions are open for students and professionals from all the disciplines of design.
- + The team limit for this competition is 4 members maximum per team.
- + You can register more than one team but they have to be registered separately.
- + Ensure that the final sheets submitted do not include your name or any other mark of identification.
- + Your submission is linked to your UNI user account which stands as your identification, we do not have any identification codes.
- + This is a design idea challenge only. There is no built commission/realization associated with problem.
- + In case of publication in yearbook we will reach out separately for selected entries.

Pro Tips

- + Use exploded views to discuss multi levelled conceptual models better.
 - + Mention sheet number on corner of every sheet.
 - + Plagiarism of any idea / form / design / image will be disqualified with a notice.
 - + All the sheets or images will be viewed on a digital device. e.g. Laptop screen or projector.
- Uploaded sheets or images will not be physically printed for evaluation. The submission hence should be prepared for digital viewing only.
- + Submit JPEG images only. (PNG will not function)

Disqualification

The competition is protected by our [disqualification policy](#) to support fair play in a competitive environment like UNI. Participants are requested to stick to the details in the brief and connect with the curatorial committee on contact@uni.xyz in case of doubts or revisions.

Please check the link above for details. Failure to adherence may lead to soft or hard disqualification based on violation.

Judging Criteria

The entries will be judged by an international jury of the competition on the following criterions:

Presentation: The fundamental to a good entry is a visual delivery of ideas.

Concept/Idea: Quality of thought and intent in pre-design phase.

Programme/Spaces: How the spaces are conceived along with the programme.

Design Outcome The final architectural outcome of the solution.

The judging panel can also add other criterions based on their internal discussions - which will be in line with the problem statement. Participants are advised to fulfil above given criterions first in their design. Names of the jury panel will be announced soon.

Prizes / Deadlines / Registration

For complete information on active prizes and details on the entry fee, visit the **Awards & Fees** section of the competition here: - [Awards&Fees](#)

Learn more about this competition here: <https://uni.xyz/competitions/visionary/info/about>

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