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\$EED BANK

Community Seed Banks for Megacities

<http://competitions.uni.xyz>



Img 1: Mass consumerism with cities - An example

Premise

Food is one of the most fundamental elements of human existence. The way we produce, store and consume food has evolved greatly through time. Humans have thrived and survived because our ancestors learnt how to gather, produce and consume food. Our sustenance has been ensured due to these crucial elements of knowledge passed through generations.

As industrialization percolated in civilization, **mass production** began. Then there was an influx of **consumers** - who were capable of paying for the food, instead of producing it. The need to grow food depleted, and as a result, skills and crafts related to agriculture and food production are gradually becoming mostly obsolete in the urbane environment.

Mass consumerism through supermarkets is slowly changing how we **perceive, acquire** and **consume food**.



Img_2: Global warming by excessive production/pollution

Decline

The **paradigm shift** in food production and consumption interspersed with the rising population of our cities creates a bigger problem. We are now wholly reliant on global networks of production and distribution. We are inevitably dependent on the organizations that control these processes. **Food production and consumption have become more economic** which in a way has defined what grows and what doesn't.

As individuals, not only we are losing access to crucial, knowledge pertaining to self sustenance but also losing the diverse species rapidly. The availability and access to plants/food that fulfils the dietary needs of an individual are ensured by the corporations today, making us vulnerable to concepts like **food insecurity**.

This may behold merit when we see in terms of optimization, however really bad in terms of the planet itself. Global warming is in a way exacerbating this slow unseen process of vanishing plant species. This cyclic process of decreasing plant diversity in tandem with worsening climate makes things even gloomy for our urban lifestyle in the coming future.



Img_3: Commercializing farming and crop growth

Issue

The **Industrial Revolution** has provided us with a highly consistent supply of processed food, reaching markets of the megacities we reside in. In a way, it has given birth to issues like **overconsumption, poor quality, high wastage** and an **over-dependence** on manufacturing agencies.

On the flip side, we cannot escape mechanization, which successfully meets the soaring demands of consumers. Artificially increasing the speed of production and boosting longevity by adding preservatives is a hidden yet common practice, gravely affecting the quality of items we consume. In the longer run, our perception of **fresh food will be completely eroded**.

By this model, only economically viable species will flourish, everything else will wither. This rampant commoditization is a slow time bomb that will deteriorate our environment.



Cities are the **locus** of **economic activity** where so many things come together to **make world happen**.

If people coming and living together is causing so many problems to emerge,

Can we solve this one together?



Img_4: Seeds an origin of everything - A concept

Brief

In a situation when **cities are landlocked** and are **officially labelled as consumers**, this falling rates of biodiversity makes **humanity more and more vulnerable gradually**. **Seeds** may be insignificant things but, they **evolve into things that feed or sustain the entire environment** we live in.

How can we inspire a positive change in cities we live in where people **can learn about these vanishing species and grow/maintain on their own?** How can we change the downside of cities, i.e. overcrowding and increasing susceptibility to collapse, to more **self-sufficient and more resilient places** of living?

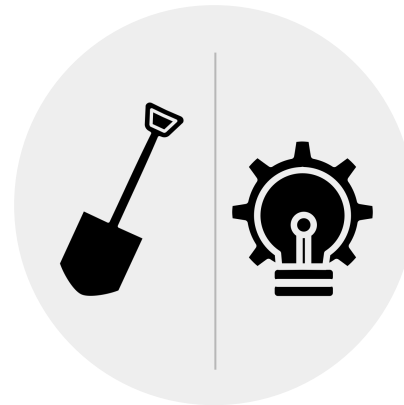
How can we create cities as **micro seed economies** where not **only urban farming happens**, but everyone contributes to the **food chain by small endeavours and smarter techniques of farming?**

Objectives



Repository and Display

To house a library of seeds and a display facility.



Learning

Spaces for both facets of learning -
Active (participation) as well as
Passive (observation)



Services

Ensure the necessary service areas and its functionality



Commerce

An avenue for the contributors and participants to convert the produce for sale or barter.

Design Challenge: To design an urban seed bank and farming hub where people can learn about how agriculture works at large and borrow equipment and seeds from the bank. This micro-network creates spaces where farming is not only learnt but made possible in vertical yet healthy spaces.

This bank will also be a repository of plant biodiversity located inside the city - where seeds could be mobilized in case of any crisis.

You can also include a multi-level market where not only grown produce is available but spaces for the barter of homegrown produce can be exchanged.

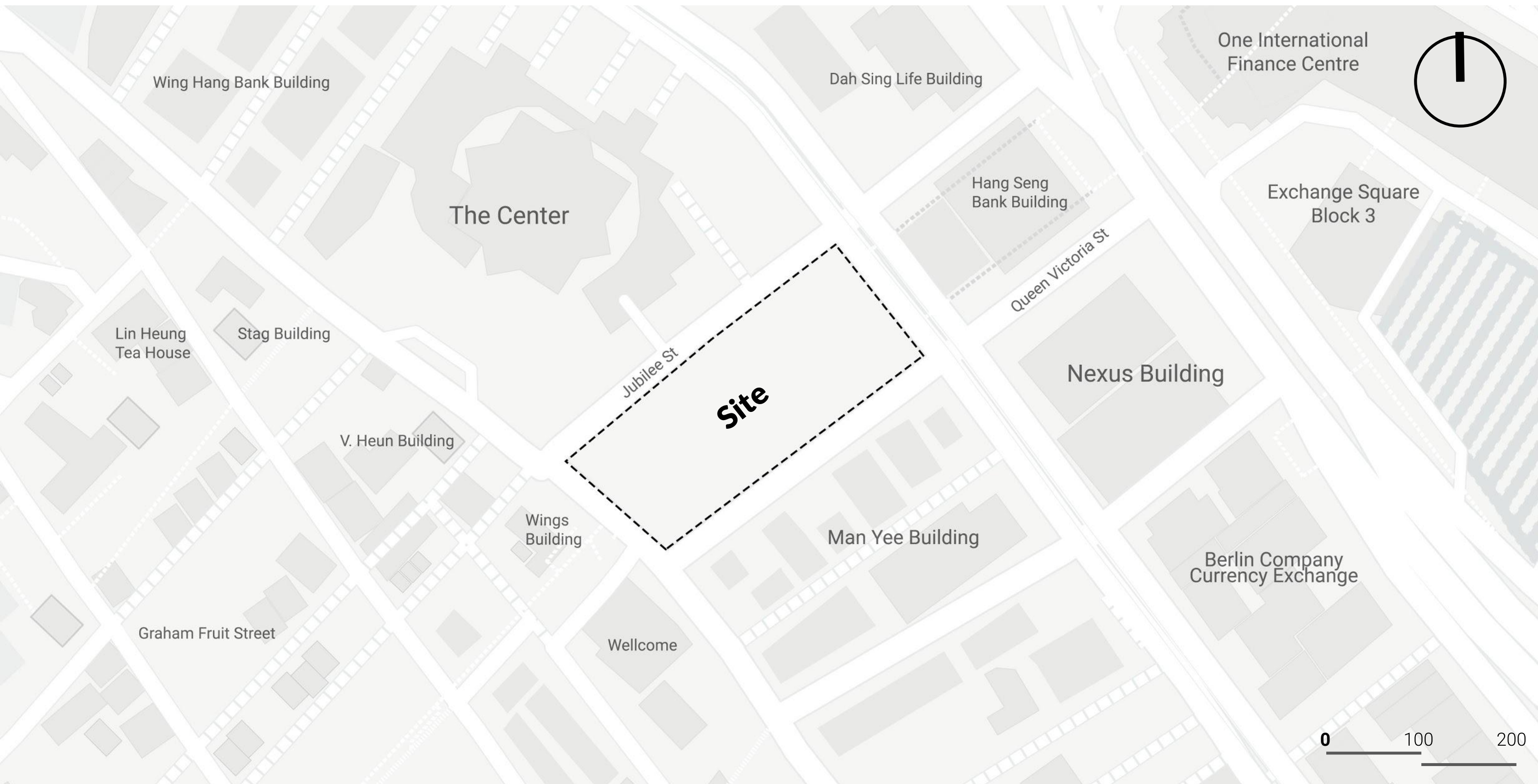
The following objectives can be a point of beginning to conceive this design. Participants can assume their contexts and users before initiating their design process.



Img 5: Aerial view of Hong Kong

Hong Kong, China

Hong Kong is a special administrative region on the eastern side of Pearl River Sanctuary in Southern China with a high-density population of over **7.4 million** people of various nationalities. Once sparsely inhabited land of farming and fishing villages has now grown into a city with the **largest number of Skyscrapers**. The **high-rise, high-density** city has inevitably created a vast disconnect with nature for its residents and has arable land of a mere 2.9%. As the developers saw growing vertically as the only option not only for housing but for the natural environment as well. The city started with initiatives of rooftop farming and have successfully set-up about 30,000 sq ft of the same. Nonetheless, the city currently needs to import about **90% of its food supplies from China even with the threat of contamination**.



Img.6: Site Plan

Site Plan

The site chosen for this project is a **Grade 3 historical building** that was a marketplace and has been defunct for over a decade. It lies in the heart of the city in Central Hong Kong surrounded by high rise buildings and a busy commercial area. The **“Seed Bank”** is to be conceived in such locality to enable accessibility for the working population and create awareness at the same time. Such a programmatic model of a seed bank can be designed for any mega-city with a dense urban fabric.

Area: **4129** m²
 Height limit: 90m
 Site coordinates: [22°17'02.4"N](#)
[114°09'19.5"E](#)
 Ground Coverage: Entire site limit

Submission

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

- A maximum of 4 boards / sheets. – [**2362px x 3544px**] or [**400mm x 600mm in 150 dpi**] in portrait digital format (JPEG).
- Each image should be less than **15MB**
- You can find the preset PSD, AI and INDD template files in the 'additional resources folder' and [here](#).

This additional resources folder contains: FAQ Questions, High Res maps, Sketchup Model of the site and CAD file of the site plan.

Minimum requisites in the sheets are 3 sheets/boards + Cover image containing:

- Site plan (Compulsory)
- Key conceptual sections x 1 (Minimum)
- 3D views x 4
- Cover image/Thumbnail of size 2000 x 1000 px or larger in aspect ratio 2:1.
- Floor plans, images, sketches (if any) can be added to support the entry in the form of additional images.
- Answer 6 FAQ questions in the discussion section as given on the 'additional resources folder'.

-
- + The team limit for this competition is 4 members maximum.
 - + Use exploded views to discuss multi levelled conceptual models better.
 - + Ensure that the final sheets which are submitted do not include your name or any other mark of identification.
 - + Mention sheet number on corner of every sheet.
 - + This is a design ideas challenge only. There is no built commission/realization is associated with the problem
 - + Plagiarism of any idea / form / design / image will be disqualified with a notice.

Registration page here: <https://competitions.uni.xyz/seed-bank>

Submission Deadline: December 16, 2019

Submission closes this day.

Public Voting Starts: December 31, 2019

Voting starts on this date.

Public Voting ends: January 18, 2020

Voting ends on this date.

Result Announcement: January 30, 2020

Result day!

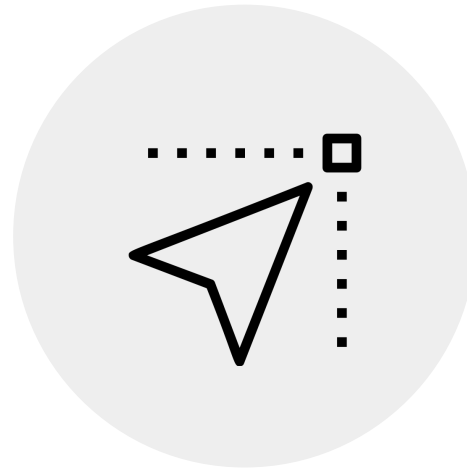
Rewards



Grants of up to a total of **20,000\$** can be won on this challenge. Learn more about the full conditions on the competition page [here](#).

Judging Criteria

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



Presentation

The fundamental to a good entry is a good presentation.



Concept/Idea

Quality of thought and intent in pre-design phase.



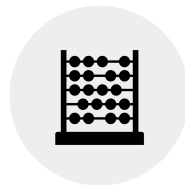
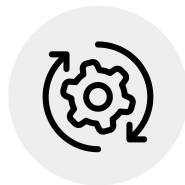
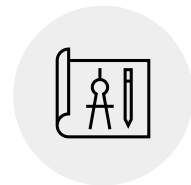
Spaces/Programme

How the spaces are calculated and ordered.



Design Output

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.

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Unfuse serves as a unit block for **Uni** in the field of Architecture. It intends to break the fusion of traditional design barriers and methodologies by making it a platform for experimentation and conceptual exchange of ideas in architecture, urbanism, society, culture and ecology. It is a research initiative dedicated to providing opportunities for designers from all domains to explore ideas that go beyond the boundaries of architectural discipline and enrich our built environment; thereby opening up possibilities for promotion of architectural thought at a global level.

Queries: support@uni.xyz

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Building **cities** as **seed economies**.

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