



جامعة أم القرى  
UMM AL-QURA UNIVERSITY

College of  
**Engineering and Architecture**

Department of  
**Architecture**

Operational Plan for  
**Community Service and  
Voluntary Contribution**

2025-2026



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# Operational Plan for Community Service and Voluntary Contribution, Architecture and Planning Program

## Executive Summary

### Goal 4: Community Engagement and Social Responsibility

Objective 1:


**Engaging with the local community and contributing to its development through architectural and urban projects.**

Executive Steps/Procedures	Implementation Responsibility	KPIs	Target Benchmark
Launch community-based design projects addressing local urban and architectural needs.	Department Administration, Student Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of community projects and initiatives implemented.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≥ 1 community engagement projects annually.</li> </ul>
Organize public workshops, exhibitions, and open lectures.	Department Administration, Student Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation rate of faculty and students in community activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≥ 1 active partnership per year.</li> </ul>
Partner with professional associations.	Department Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of partnerships with external stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≥ 1 active partnership per year.</li> </ul>
Integrate community service projects into architectural and urban studios and graduation projects.	Faculty members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of community projects and initiatives implemented.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≥ 2 community engagement projects annually.</li> </ul>

Objective 2:

**Promoting voluntary contribution.**

Executive Steps/Procedures	Implementation Responsibility	KPIs	Target Benchmark
Establish a structured volunteering program aligned with community needs.	Department Administration, Student Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of volunteer programs and activities organized annually.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≥ 2 volunteer initiatives annually.</li> </ul>
Encourage students to participate in volunteer activities.	Department Administration, Student Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of students engaged in voluntary work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≥ 50% student participation.</li> </ul>
Encourage faculty to participate in volunteer activities.	Department Administration, Student Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of faculty engaged in voluntary work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≥ 20% faculty involvement.</li> </ul>
Create a database of volunteer opportunities.	Department Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of volunteer programs and activities organized annually.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≥ 2 volunteer initiatives annually.</li> </ul>
Recognize and reward outstanding volunteer contributions.	Department Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of students engaged in voluntary work.</li> <li>Percentage of faculty engaged in voluntary work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≥ 50% student participation.</li> <li>≥ 20% faculty involvement.</li> </ul>
Document and publish the department's volunteer achievements annually.	Department Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of volunteer programs and activities organized annually.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≥ 2 volunteer initiatives annually.</li> </ul>



## **Section 1: Strategic Context and Foundational Framework**

The architecture and planning program at Umm Al-Qura University (UQU) operates within a unique cultural and urban environment, demanding a robust commitment to social responsibility that transcends traditional academic boundaries. Goal 4 of the program objectives, focusing on Community Engagement and Social Responsibility and Promoting Voluntary Contribution, is not merely a supplementary goal but a central pillar aligning the department's intellectual capital with the national mandate of Saudi Vision 2030 and UQU's distinct role in Makkah.

### **1.1. Alignment with Saudi Vision 2030 and UQU's Strategic Role**

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 places strong emphasis on enhancing the quality of life and fostering a vibrant society characterized by strong civic engagement and a thriving non-profit sector. Recent national reports indicate that the objective of promoting voluntary work has been met six years ahead of schedule, with a record 1.2 million volunteers engaging nationally. The collective surge in volunteering hours—increasing by 51% to 80 million hours in a single year—positions the Kingdom as a regional leader in volunteerism. This exponential growth underscores the necessity for academic institutions like UQU to contribute measurable, high-quality efforts. UQU cares about spreading the culture of volunteering based on its belief that volunteer work has an important and positive role in strengthening the community structure in all areas. Therefore, the University has launched the Enhancing Volunteer Work and Social Responsibility Program to spread the volunteering culture and encourage the different bodies of the University to exert more efforts to enhance it. Through this program, the University seeks to have an effective role in increasing the number of volunteers, training them, and transferring experience to them. This enhances their skills and leads to offering quality volunteer services within an integrated system, consistent with the National Transformation Program in Saudi Vision 2030, which encourages volunteer work. This program also aims to activate community engagement and enhance partnerships with various sectors. The University plays a significant role in promoting social responsibility by directing its academic and research capabilities to serve community issues and contribute to its development. It also helps raise students' awareness of the values of giving and belonging by involving them in community activities and initiatives, while working to harness knowledge to find solutions to local challenges.


### **1.2. Definition and Principles of Service-Learning and Needs-Based Design**

To ensure that community engagement is rigorous, ethical, and pedagogically sound, the department adopts two guiding frameworks: Service-Learning (SL) and Needs-Based Design (NBD).

#### **1.2.1. Service-Learning as Pedagogy**

Service-learning is a pedagogical approach wherein students collaborate actively with social actors on concrete community issues as a mandatory part of the academic curriculum. This process mandates structured reflection, allowing students to integrate theoretical frameworks learned during their studies with practical field experiences. This method fosters growth across academic, professional, social, and personal domains, reinforcing the university's mission to put its knowledge at the service of people and society, especially vulnerable groups. For the department, this commitment requires integrating service components earlier in the curriculum, rather than limiting them to optional or advanced studies, thus ensuring all graduates become civic-minded practitioners.

#### **1.2.2. Needs-Based Design (NBD) Framework**



The NBD framework governs project selection and execution, guaranteeing that design efforts are centered on authentic community needs. This system uses an "outside-in" systems thinking approach, ensuring that solutions address complex and interrelated problems involving individuals, society, and the environment. The core methodology of NBD is the **IDEA Method**:

1. **Intend:** Clearly state the project goals and anticipated outcomes.
2. **Discover:** Critically, this phase involves identifying the specific needs of the social and natural communities involved. It is essential that the community partner, and not the faculty member, is the primary identifier of the community's needs and aspirations.
3. **Envision:** Define a successful future for the project, grounded in sustainability principles and basic human needs (e.g., identity, affection, protection).
4. **Act:** Execute the vision through an integrated design and planning process, culminating in actionable outputs.



## Section 2: Operationalizing Goal 4:

### Community Engagement and Social Responsibility

#### Objective 1:

Engaging with the local community and contributing to its development through architectural and urban projects.

#### 2.1. Launch community-based design projects addressing local urban and architectural needs.

(Executive Steps 1)

Faculty involvement in "real" community-based projects is essential to elevate the department's contribution beyond academic outputs. This participation involves faculty members actively engaging in professional architecture and urban design/planning projects that directly serve the local community. These projects leverage the specialized expertise of professors to provide practical, high-level solutions for urban challenges in Makkah. This active deployment of academic faculty to assist government and private institutions in national and community development echoes successful models and ensures the department is contributing measurable, professional knowledge.

##### 2.1.1 Commissioning and Sourcing

The Department Administration will actively solicit formal Requests for Proposals (RFPs) from key local stakeholders, including the Royal Commission for Makkah city and the holy sites, the Makkah Municipality, regional development authorities, and major non-profit organizations. The focus will be on projects that require expert intervention in areas such as heritage preservation and specialized facility design.

##### 2.1.2 Formation of Faculty Teams

To ensure effective participation and multidisciplinary collaboration, the Department will establish specialized faculty teams in architecture, urban design, and urban planning to lead and implement these commissioned projects. Each team will be structured according to project scale and expertise requirements, fostering cross-disciplinary synergy and knowledge exchange. These faculty groups will act as professional task forces representing the department in addressing real urban challenges, ensuring academic knowledge is directly translated into impactful community outcomes.

##### 2.1.3 Formal Reporting and Impact Measurement

The success of these faculty-led interventions will be quantified not merely by completion but by policy influence. Results must be formally documented in the department's Annual Community Service Report to demonstrate the tangible application of academic expertise in community development.



## 2.2. Plan for Organizing Public Workshops, Exhibitions, and Open Lectures (Executive Step 2)

The organization of public outreach activities, including workshops, exhibitions, and open lectures—is essential for disseminating knowledge, building civic awareness, and gathering community input.

### 2.2.1. Specialized Workshop Programming

Workshops will be delivered collaboratively by the Department Administration and the Student Club, focusing on technical skills and critical architecture and urban discussions relevant to Makkah. Suggested topics are:

- **Traditional Architecture Recording:** Workshops focused on building archaeology techniques (TRABASA) to document and analyze vernacular structures, such as those with traditional Rawashen (projected balconies).
- **Participatory Planning:** Sessions utilizing platforms like ‘Balady’ or ‘Istitlaa’ to teach the public and students how to navigate and engage with government planning processes, thereby addressing existing limitations in participatory transparency.
- **Digital Design and Sustainability:** Focusing on applying advanced technologies like Artificial Intelligence and Digital Twins to solve local societal issues providing concrete examples of human-interaction research.

### 2.2.2. High-Visibility Exhibitions and Dissemination

The department must elevate the exposure of its service-learning outputs beyond internal academic forums (like criticism sessions or jury sessions). An annual departmental exhibition must be a high-profile event, designed to attract local media, municipality officials, and external stakeholders.

Furthermore, student projects that offer innovative reflections on the contemporary urban environment of Saudi Arabia, such as those detailing sustainable designs or proposing community-based architecture, should be prepared for submission to national stages, such as the Saudi Pavilion at the International Architecture Exhibition (the Venice Biennale), positioning UQU as a leading intellectual force.

### 2.2.3. Measuring Public Reach and Engagement

The traditional KPI of measuring the participation rate of faculty and students must be augmented to quantify community impact. The department will track the total unique community members reached through physical attendance and digital platforms, alongside media impressions generated by public events and publications. This refined measure provides a clearer picture of the department’s reach and success in fostering urban awareness.



### 2.3. Plan for Partnering with Professional Associations (Executive Step 3)

Strategic partnerships with external stakeholders are critical for connecting academic knowledge to professional practice and securing external resources. The KPI is the number of partnerships with external stakeholders.

#### 2.3.1. Strategic Partnership Targets

Collaborations with key national entities:

- **Architecture and Design Commission (ADC):** Collaboration with the ADC can achieve mutual goals of developing the sector and supporting national talent. This includes organizing joint knowledge-sharing workshops, specialized training programs, and sponsoring design competitions and Designation initiatives, which focus on developing solutions for pressing social needs through innovation.
- **Saudi Society for Architecture and Planning (SAPA):** SAPA is dedicated to enhancing the academic environment and promoting the awareness of Islamic and Saudi architecture. Collaboration can focus on linking students with professionals, offering joint workshops (e.g., skill development in AutoCAD), and securing industry mentors for senior architecture students.
- **Saudi Urban Society, Saudi Healthcare Architects, Al-Omran**

The department will also seek formal partnerships with specialized civil society organizations (CSOs) that directly address urban quality of life and infrastructure design. Collaboration with groups like the Saudi Urban Society, Saudi Healthcare Architects, provides a means for the department to contribute its expertise toward sustainable development, leveraging the non-profit sector's capacity for innovation in solving development challenges and enhancing social cohesion, as mandated by Vision 2030.

- **Leading Construction/Development Firms:** Partnerships here secure cooperative training and career opportunities for students, aligning the department's activities with corporate social responsibility mandates and industry needs.

## 2.4. Plan for Launching Community-Based Design Projects & Integrating Service-Learning (Executive Steps 4)

The strategic plan requires launching community-based design projects and integrating these service projects directly into architectural and urban studios and graduation projects. Responsibility rests collectively with the Department Administration and Faculty members. The Key Performance Indicator (KPI) is the number of community projects and initiatives implemented.

### 2.4.1. Project Identification, Vetting, and Scoping (Discovery Phase)

Projects must be prioritized based on their potential to address the unique context of Makkah’s urban challenges. This includes developing intervention strategies for areas affected by demolition and displacement stemming from mega-projects. Project selection will rigorously adhere to the NBD principle that the community partner defines the need.

### 2.4.2. Service-Learning Curricular Integration Model

Service-learning is an instructional mandate. While complex SL projects will be required in 4th and 5th-year studios and graduation project, the foundational principles of co-design and needs assessment must be introduced much earlier in the curriculum. For example, introductory design studios can incorporate small, socially focused exercises that teach students how to connect abstract design vocabularies and processes to local social issues, bridging the gap between theoretical teaching and real-world application early on.

The integration model is summarized below:

*Table 1: Framework for Curricular Integration and Service-Learning Assessment*

Curriculum Level	Integration Method	SL Component Focus	Assessment Metric
Foundation Studios	Small 2D/3D exercises	Discovery: Needs Identification (Local Social Context)	Reflective essay on community perspective; Concept making focused on social use.
Intermediate Studios	Design Studio	Envision: Co-designing solutions with specific community actors (e.g., local schools).	Mid-term participatory workshop results; Design solution viability.
Advanced/Graduation	Comprehensive Project	Act: Production of implementable designs, construction documentation, policy or regulatory proposals.	Community partner endorsement; Feasibility report; Public exhibition.



## Section 3:

### Objective 2:

Promoting voluntary contribution.

This objective requires establishing a structured, recognized, and technologically supported system for volunteerism among students and faculty, ensuring alignment with UQU's institutional commitment and national volunteer targets.

#### 3.1. Establishing a Structured Volunteering Program

(Executive Step 1)

The responsibility for establishing a structured volunteering program aligned with community needs rests with the Department Administration and the Student Club. The KPI is the number of volunteer programs and activities organized annually.

##### 3.1.1. Governance and Coordination

The department must operate in direct coordination with the Umm Al-Qura University department for Volunteer Work and Social Responsibility, ensuring centralized support, policy alignment, and compliance.

##### 3.1.2. Program Stream Development

To maximize the impact and relevance of voluntary work, activities must be structured into skill-based streams that utilize the specialized knowledge of architecture and planning students and faculty:

- **Architectural Heritage:** Volunteers dedicate time to digital documentation, surveying, and archiving threatened local architectural heritage elements in Makkah.
- **Architecture and Urban Awareness:** Students mentor local community groups or high school students, spreading urban awareness and promoting careers in architecture.

Mandatory orientation and training sessions for all participants will cover safety, ethical engagement, and cultural sensitivity, ensuring high-quality, responsible service delivery.



### 3.2. Strategies for Encouraging Participation

(Executive Steps 2 & 3)

Encouragement efforts target both students and faculty to increase their participation rates in voluntary activities.

#### 3.2.1. Student Mobilization and Incentives

While participation may not be mandatory, the department must set a clear, articulated expectation for engagement (e.g., completion of 20 verified volunteer hours per academic year for high distinction or recognition). The Student Club will be the primary mechanism for recruitment and management, leveraging peer influence to foster a supportive and active volunteer culture. The program will utilize models that successfully link students (mentees) with experienced UQU students or industry professionals (mentors) to enhance motivation and career development.

#### 3.2.2. Faculty Incentivization and Formal Integration

Faculty engagement can be strengthened by formalizing recognition and aligning service leadership with career advancement.

- **Recognition:** Successful direction of high-impact community projects or substantial verified volunteer hours must translate into tangible academic rewards, such as formal departmental honors or special consideration for reduced administrative loads in subsequent semesters, validating the time commitment as essential academic work.

### 3.3. Creating Volunteer Opportunities Database

(Executive Step 4)

A prerequisite for successful management and accountability is the creation of an accurate database of volunteer opportunities.

#### 3.3.1. The Architecture and Urban Volunteer Database

The Department Administration could develop a dedicated Architecture and Urban Volunteer Database designed to organize, record, and manage volunteer opportunities for both faculty and students. This centralized digital system will provide structured data management for volunteer activities, including opportunity listings, participant registration, event scheduling, notifications, and real-time tracking of volunteer hours. The database will ensure that each activity, whether community design initiatives, sustainability projects, or heritage conservation programs.

### 3.4. Recognition, Reward, and Documentation

(Executive Steps 5 & 6)

Formal recognition mechanisms and rigorous documentation are vital for sustainability and motivation.

#### 3.4.1. Formal Recognition Framework

The Department Administration could lead the formal recognition process. The "UQU Architecture Department Excellence in Service Award" could be established.

- **Student Rewards:** Outstanding student contributions (e.g., achieving significant verified hours, leading successful community projects) will be recognized through diplomas, public celebrations, transcript notations, and nominations for external awards.
- **Faculty Rewards:** Faculty recognition will be formalized through inclusion in academic portfolios and public acknowledgment during departmental and university events.

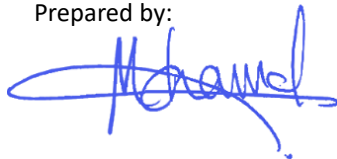
#### 3.4.2. Annual Social Impact and Volunteerism Report

The department will commit to documenting and publishing a comprehensive Annual Social Impact Report. This report will serve as a definitive statement of the department's civic role and contribution to national goals.

##### Key Reporting Metrics:

1. **Total Verified Volunteer Hours:** The quantitative contribution to the aggregated national total of volunteer hours.
2. **Community Reach:** Number of beneficiaries served, and unique community members engaged through projects.
3. **Qualitative Achievements:** In-depth case studies detailing the impact of high-profile service-learning projects and policy submissions.
4. **KPI Performance:** Official tracking of the percentage of students and faculty engaged in voluntary work

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