

Press release

03 June 2016

Winner of tenth RIBA Norman Foster Travelling Scholarship announced

View winning proposal

The 2016 RIBA Norman Foster Travelling Scholarship has been awarded to Abel Feleke from the University of Western Australia for his proposal, 'Weaving the Urban Fabric: Examining the Significance of Community'.

Abel's study will take him to China, India, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Mexico and Brazil to learn from the strong sense of community that binds informal settlements. He quotes Kalpana Sharma, "A slum is not a chaotic collection of structures; it is a dynamic collection of individuals who have figured out how to survive in the most adverse of circumstances", and will explore the intricate social networks that have evolved in these environments.

The scholarship jury was chaired by Lord Foster with Julia Barfield (Marks Barfield Architects), RIBA President Jane Duncan, Professor Flora Samuel (University of Reading); and Stefan Behling, Spencer de Grey, and Piers Heath of Foster + Partners.

The jury highly commended 'Mapping In-Betweenness: A multi-disciplinary study of transient refugee camps' by Seyedeh Tahmineh Hooshyar Emami from the Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London. Seyedeh wins a camera for her proposal to investigate what the response of architects should be to the refugee crisis in Europe.

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"I am delighted that the 2016 RIBA Norman Foster Travelling Scholarship has been awarded to Abel Feleke to support him in examining communities established in informal settlements. His motivation for embarking on the project is commendable and I await the findings with great interest."

Jane Duncan, RIBA President

"The award is now in its tenth year, and once again, the standard of all the entries was extremely high – giving the jury much to deliberate upon. The study of informal settlements was a widespread theme, with the sites of investigation ranging from cities in developing countries to refugee camps. Abel Feleke's proposal was unanimously chosen as the winning entry due to its clarity of purpose and unique approach – looking at these dense urban communities as a network of social relations. I am pleased that this scholarship will help further Abel's research, and look forward to seeing the project develop over the coming months."

Norman Foster, Founder and Executive Chairman

Notes to editors:

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- The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) champions better buildings, communities and the environment through architecture and our members www.architecture.com
- The winning proposal can be **viewed online**, along with previous awards:
- Initially set up in 2006 as a biennial programme, the £6,000 RIBA Norman Foster Travelling Scholarship is awarded to one student to fund international research on a topic and in a location of their choice. In 2009, Foster + Partners enabled the Scholarship to be awarded annually by donating an extra £100,000 to the endowment.
- For information about applying to the RIBA Norman Foster Travelling Scholarship, contact John-Paul Nunes or Hayley Russell in the RIBA Education Department on 020 7307 3678, or visit the **Norman Foster Scholarship page** on the RIBA website.