

ARCHITECTURE ASIA MAGAZINE

*Review of AA Magazine Bid by Ar. Rita Soh
as per request of President Ar Saifuddin Ahmad*

**Request for Proposal was issued to ARCASIA Member Institutes
on 31 July 2024 for :**

- Publisher for the publication and supply of Architecture Asia Magazine & its advertising sales

Essential key requirements are:

- Architecture Asia Magazine (AA), the magazine for ARCASIA are to be distributed to all its 24 member Institutes and to be commercially available via subscription.
- AA magazine is in English & features editorial related to Architects, Architectural or Design work, industry news & information related to ARCASIA.
- The Publisher will supply print & electronic versions of the magazine, including e-magazines/e-books and be made available in the AA website (to be maintained by the Publisher) & other appropriate e-magazine publishing portal such as Zinio (or similar).
- Contract period is for five years; from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2030 (both dates inclusive).
- The Publisher will commit to a contract with ARCASIA for the period stated, with terms consistent with the items stated in Appendix A and their proposed terms accepted by ARCASIA.
- The Publisher will work with the incumbent Publisher (ASC + TJU) to ensure a smooth handover prior to the publication of its first issue in 2026.
- The Publisher shall declare their involvement in the production of any other magazine or website of any other regional architectural organization that is a competitor of ARCASIA.

Further requirements include:

- The Publisher is to quote for the publication & supply of AA Magazine with advertising sales / revenues.
- The Publisher must submit a proposal based on a model where ARCASIA is not required to provide any financial outlay.
ARCASIA will not bear any costs or losses if the publications generate zero or negative revenue and shall not contribute any money towards the production of the magazine.
- All publication and production costs of the magazine to be borne by the Publisher, including the delivery of the magazines to one location per member institute.
The cost of production (which includes technical requirements & maintenance of the e-books, editorial work, printing, photography for editorials where applicable)

shall be deducted from the advertising and listing revenue generated through advertisement sales or other mutually agreed means.

Submission Requirements:

- Samples of their proposed content, design & layout of the magazine as part of the selection process.
- Strategy, content and revenue proposal.

Due Date for submission : Sat 31 May 2025 , via email to :

arcasia.hon.sec@gmail.com

**At the closing of the Submission date,
only 1 member institute made a submission for the above.**

Submission Received from: Architectural Society of China

ASC submitted the following 2 documents:

- **Their Proposal for the publication & supply of AA Magazine and its advertising sales**

Background:

- As the incumbent publisher for the AA Magazine since 2019, they provided a background update over the last 5 years on their journey in expanding the platform for Asian architects to exchange ideas and display their works as well as providing the public with opportunities to understand the diversity of Asian architecture. In the face of unforeseen challenges such as the impact of Covid -19 in 2020, they had undertaken innovative working modes to transform prevailing publishing and fund-raising models.
- With the new round of challenges, ASC has submitted a proposal committed to expand AA magazine's coverage and influence to a wider audience in the architectural industry, enhance the AA magazine's international influence and to inject new vitality in the development of Asian architecture.

Work Achievements (2020 – 2025):

- ASC had explored expansion into more areas; such as from Exhibition of architectural design works to an in-depth discussion of Asian architecture

academics. Further exploration into cultural background, social impact and future development trends to the model of ‘Academic articles + Architectural works’; showcasing the theoretical connotation & development logic of Asian architecture.

- From traditional paper publication to multi-platform architectural media; ASC had actively promoted the transformation of paper magazine to digital media such as website and Facebook, achieving free electronic version.

ASC undertook a comprehensive visual design review for the magazine’s logo, website layout and internal page formatting, thereby expanded its audience coverage, improves content visibility and enhances speed in sharing breaking news, industry trends and promote important events quickly.

(website – <https://www.architecture-asia.com>)

- From one-way information dissemination to multiple forms of meeting via extension in the depth of discussion in theme journal such as the Asian Architecture Forum to invite dialogues between scholars and architects. ASC hope to establish more of such interactive environment for architecture discourse and knowledge exchanges.
- From discussion of architectural topics to the focus concerns on member countries of ARCASIA. Through selected architectural works, in-depth analysis via articles, to interviews and discussions on local culture and its impact of architecture.
- To date, ASC has published 17 issues of AA magazine, including 14 themed issues and 5 special issues on ARCASIA Awards for Architecture, covering more than 70 scholars, 300 architects in about 20 countries and regions.

Future Plan (2026 – 2030):

- With more established publishing model and expanded network of contacts, ASC plans to continue to improve the editorial model for the 5 years. Leveraging the last 5 years experience, ASC aims to continue to champion and promote the values for ARCASIA and to extend the international influence of Architecture Asia via the following:
 - Increase reader diversity and expand international communication channels.
 - Highlight more on ARCASIA member Institutes; via forums related to magazine themes to show case the difference and common trends development in the various region of Asia.
 - Optimize the publication model of ARCASIA Awards for Architecture Album; ASC will work with AAA organisers to optimize the album publishing process to ensure a high quality, timeliness effect of the ARCASIA Awards for Architecture Album.

- Encourage young architects and architectural scholar to participate actively in the content creation of AA magazine.

Finance and operations (2026 – 2030):

- From ASC previous venture, the cost accounting required an annual budget of about USD \$80,000; including the labour wages of editors and assistants, guest editors' salaries and commissioned authors' royalties.

With increase of physical meetings opportunities in the future, the expected expenses of international travels, mailing etc will increase.

- To date ASC's editorial department has a stable source of funds, mainly from relevant architectural design companies, architectural schools etc.

In order to cope with possible increase in future expense, ASC will further improve the fund preparation model and expand international advertising business to ensure financial sustainability.

- **Financial Proposal form the Architectural Society of China for the publication and supply of Architectural Asia Magazine**

With ASC experience in AA magazine (2020 to 2025), the annual expenditure after electronification is ~ **USD 81,360**

This included editing expenses, daily staff expenses. For the AA Magazine to be published quarterly, out of the 4 issues each year, three are to be themed issues and the one special issue will be on ARCASIA Awards for Architecture. The contents in the themed issue are compiled by the editorial team or guest editors. Therefore, the following are the likely costs/expenses :

- **Editing Expenses** – Annual editing expenses estimated to cost :

USD \$ 13,800 comprises 4 components:

- Remuneration for guest editors.(each issue: USD 1,400)
- Author manuscript preparation fee (each issue 5 papers @USD 400 each author)
- Printing Fee
- Mailing

- **Total Annual Budget : Estimated**

- Editing Expenses = USD 13,800
- Daily Operational Expenses = USD 53,760
- Other Expenses. = USD 13,800

total. = **USD 81,360**

Funding Sources:

To date, the editorial department is :

- Funded mainly from Tongji Architectural Design (Group) Co. Ltd and College of Architecture and Urban Planning Tongji University etc.
- Funding from Tongji Architectural Design (Group) Co Ltd covered part of the publishing and labor expenses
- Funding from College of Architecture and Urban Planning, Tongji University covered the editing expenses.

Presently, editorial department received advertising requests from several architectural firms, material suppliers and Foundations (including Norman Foster Foundation)

Hence there is a need to revisit the funding revenue sources.

***Note: Attached to this document are tables that showed breakdown of the various cost items
(to be separately deliberated once the overall proposal is deemed acceptable)***

- **ASC submission is supported by:**
Letter of Recommendation by President Xiu Long, Architectural Society of China

- **Recommendation by Advisor Ar, Rita Soh**
(on the request of ARCASIA President Ar. Saifuddin Ahmad) :

*Having reviewed the above, notwithstanding the fact that ASC is the only submitted bid and given the experience that ASC have had in the publishing of the revamped AA Magazine since 2020; and the process with which they had undertaken over the last 5 years to constantly review and enhance the outreach of ARCASIA magazine, I like to recommend to President Saifuddin & Office Bearers to accept the Bid Proposal submitted by ASC; with the following qualifications to be further substantiated and submitted by **15 August 2025** :*

- *Provide an overall high level theming for the focus as described in the proposal over the next 5 years.*
- *Provide a plan/criteria on the selection of editors & guest editors with the respective terms of reference*

- *Provide a more detail annual cost plan indicating the budget for the editorial / publishing / other costs items*
- *Provide an overall plan on how to work with AA Awards team to integrate their intent to enhance the digital display of AA Awards published in the AA Magazine portal as a collective Album*

Afternote:

The OB & CC unanimously accepted the recommendation presented by Ar, Rita Soh subject to the further substantiation to be made as requested by 15 August 2025.

On 15 August 2025, ASC submitted their response to the 4 clarifications requested. As reviewer of their Bid proposal, I am satisfied with the answers given. Of course, the details will have to worked out when the next ARCASIA Council comes onboard.

While AA Magazine should be an independent entity under ARCASIA, it is critical platform to augment and further strengthen the ongoing agenda of both the incumbent President & the Council of ARCASIA. Please see supplementary information as attached.