



नेपाली वास्तुविद् समाज
**SOCIETY OF
NEPALESE ARCHITECTS (SONA)**

COUNTRY REPORT

SONA 15th Executive Committee

The 21st Asian Congress of Architects
Incheon, South Korea
8-12 Sep, 2025

1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE INSTITUTE

Society of Nepalese Architects (SONA) is the professional organization of the architects of Nepal, established in 1991 by a group of enthusiastic architects who represent the government, the private sector, and the academia. The main objective of SONA is to protect the rights and responsibilities of Nepalese architects and promote the profession of architecture in Nepal. SONA has grown over a period of 33 years from a small group of architects, concentrated in Kathmandu Valley, to a nationwide organization with a total membership of 1816 individuals. SONA has been registered as a professional organization in the District Administration Office, Kathmandu and abides by the rules and regulations of the government strictly. SONA has established its own office space at the Churchill Complex, Sundhara, Kathmandu in 2011, supported by fulltime secretariat for day-to-day administration works. SONA was a member of South Asian Association of Architects (SAARCH), Architect's Council of Asia (ARCASIA) and Union of International Architects (UIA). SONA's long-term goal is to establish a distinct identity of architects in Nepalese society by establishing architectural value in the society, and expand its membership and coverage throughout the country. It encourages the community of architect's in Nepal to provide quality service with high level of integrity and also strives for promoting an architectural character that suits our culture, geography, and demands of the modern society. It will continuously work towards the establishment of Architect's Council in Nepal similar to Nepal Engineering Council. SONA and will actively engage in strengthening the network with regional and international associations of architects with the objective of exposing Nepalese architects with international architectural trends.

2 CURRENT OFFICE BEARERS OF THE INSTITUTE

The 15th executive committee was elected under the chairmanship of Ar. Iswar Lal Joshi on the occasion of 28th Annual General Assembly ceremony of SONA held on 12th April, 2023 at Hotel Himalaya, Pulchowk, Lalitpur.

From the official election at the 28th Annual general meeting 11 members were elected through voting by the architect members of SONA. The new team officially took their oath at the hand over program and began their journey with SONA. Through weekly meetings, discussions and the new president's visions, plans were made to expand the Executive committee and make it more inclusive by adding architects from 3 different Sectors i.e. from Government Sector, Private Sector and from the Academic Sector. But according to the SONA Legislation only a committee of 11 members was possible so steps were taken to make amendments to the legislation. Through Special General Meetings and consultations with architect members and legal team, amendments were made to increase the committee member from 11 members to 15 members. The new members officially joined the team on September 4th, 2023 in a small program held at the SONA office. In total the SONA Executive Committee has 15 members starting from the 15th EC.

The members of the 15th executive committee formed are as follows:

President: Ar. Iswar Lal Joshi

Vice-Presidents:

Ar. Yekraj Adhikari (Government)
Ar. Bhuwaneshwori Parajuli (Professional Practice)
Ar. Dilli Ram Sapkota (Academic)

General Secretary: Ar. Arjun Basnet

Dy. General Secretary: Ar. Abhishek Mananda Bajracharya

Treasurer: Ar. Lokendra Acharya

Members: Ar. Astha Acharya

Ar. Sujan Silpakar

Ar. Srijana Koirala

Ar. Ruchi Bajracharya

Ar. Kaushal Shrestha

Ar. Nishaj Kunwar

Ar. Pragya Pradhan

3 CURRENT MEMBERSHIP STRENGTH

As of August 2025,

Current Membership

<i>Total Members</i>	1856
<i>General Members</i>	1308
<i>Life Members</i>	541
<i>Associate Members</i>	1
<i>Honorary Members</i>	6
<i>Female Members</i>	967
<i>Male Members</i>	882

3.1 Types of Membership

General Member

A Nepalese Citizen who has completed Minimum Bachelor's degree or higher degrees in the field of Architecture from Tribhuvan University (T.U.) or other universities recognized by T.U. can be eligible for a membership of SONA.

Life Member

The person who has been a General Member for five consecutive years with his renewal dues cleared can apply for Life Member. The person who has been a General Member for twenty-five years and renewed all his dues can be declared as a Life Member by the Executive Committee.

Associate Member

Foreign citizen, who has completed minimum Bachelor's degree or higher degrees, in the field of Architecture from T. U. or equivalent, living in Nepal and working here for more than 5 years can apply for Associate Member. Such membership should be approved by the Executive Committee, as per the laws and acts of SONA.

Honorary Member

The Person who has actively participated to highlight the goodwill and preserve the rights of the society; worked for the goodwill of architecture and architecture profession nationally and internationally; well renowned ‘Public Figure’ can be awarded as an Honorary Member.

4 BUDGET OF THE INSTITUTE

SONA being a voluntary organization, annual revenue is mainly collected by:

- Membership – new, annual membership and life member
- Organizing various Events small, medium, and large scale from the sponsors.
- Sponsorship from Annual Official Paint Partner
- The accounts of the organization is duly audited annually by a private Audit Firm.

5 CHAPTERS AND BRANCHES

SONA has been focusing on major metropolitan areas in the country beyond the capital city and Kathmandu valley. We have recently reached out to other municipalities as well, to try to establish chapters and have succeeded in opening up 2 chapters. One in the eastern region in Biratnagar which is in Province 1 and the other in Pokhara in the mid-western region in Province 4. With federalism in the country, we now have 7 provinces and we intend to have a chapter in all provinces in the near future.

With the initiation of Pokhara Chapter, we had a public exhibition at Prithvi Chowk, Pokhara on 16th December, 2023. This is the first ever activity of SONA outside Kathmandu valley and also the first of this kind to be organized by SONA chapter. Since then we have conducted various trainings outside Kathmandu in Chitwan, Bhairahawa, Pokhara and Nepalgunj

6 ANNUAL MEETING

Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Various Annual Sessions

The AGM and Annual Sessions are generally held in autumn of each year. The 29th AGM of society of Nepalese architects was held on January 11, 2024 at Alice Receptions, Gairidhara, Kathmandu Nepal.

In the AGM, general secretary Ar. Arjun Basnet presented the annual update of SONA to its general members whereas the treasurer Ar. Lokendra Acharya shared financial update of the executive committee.

7 LEGAL STATUS OF THE INSTITUTE

The Society of Nepalese Architects is registered in the Kathmandu District Office of the Government of Federal Republic of Nepal’ as a non-profit and non-governmental organization. SONA is now registered in the “Social Welfare Council of Nepal”.

8 LEGAL STATUS OF THE ARCHITECT IN THE COUNTRY

A graduate with a 5 years Bachelor's degree in Architecture is certified as an Architect by Nepal Engineering Council (NEC). However, for more than a decade, SONA is advocating for a separate legal entity, Architect's Council for Nepal.

9 ARCHITECTS' REGISTRATION AUTHORITY IN THE COUNTRY

At present, Nepal doesn't have a Council for Architects to recognize and certify a graduate architect. Hence, it is being undertaken by the Nepal Engineering Council (NEC), a government body which is responsible for all the legal registration procedures. The 15th EC has started afresh with the required legal paperwork to apply for a separate architect's council and advocacy for the same is also in full force. The letter was dispatched from Ministry of Urban Development to Ministry of Finance, where it requires approval. Sadly, further process has been stalled due to budgetary and other concerns.

10 INTERNATIONAL AFFILIATIONS OF THE INSTITUTE

- SONA became a member of ARCASIA (Architects Regional Council Asia) in 2002 AD.
- SONA is one of the founder members of SAARCH (SAARCH Association of Architects) (1991). For now, since SAARC is inactive, we are not able to work on the umbrella of SAARCH. Hence, we have formed the Architects Association of South Asia (AASA) and its formal inauguration of the establishment was on 25th of August, 2025 in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- SONA is a member of UIA (International Union of Architects) as of August 2017.

11 MAJOR PROGRAMS

(2025, Jan – 2024, August)

11.1 22nd Arcasia Forum Colombo, Sri Lanka (Jan13-29, 2025)

In total 22 delegates that included architects, accompanying person and students participated in this mega even. The delegation team was led by President Ar. Iswar Lal Joshi and General Secretary Ar. Arjun Basnet. Representatives from SONA actively participated in all five committee meetings. SONA's cultural performance was awarded the best performance at Friendship Night for the 2nd time in a row.



11.2 SONA BEEN Trainings

Bagmati Province

SONA, in collaboration with Building Energy Efficiency in Nepal (BEEN- Project) successfully conducted a 3-day training session from 14 - 16 February, 2025 on the concept of energy efficiency, parameters and strategies of Energy Efficient Building Design, and the enhancement of skills for architects and engineers in creating energy-efficient building designs for the Designers working under Bagmati Province in Kathmandu. In total 12 architects and 11 civil engineers working in various municipalities across Bagmati Province, Nepal participated in the workshop.



The session covered various aspects of inclusive energy-efficient building design and demonstrated resource-efficient tools, construction techniques like rat-trap bonds, application of insulation materials in wall and roofs. The session also highlighted the simulation and case study analysis of energy efficient building, which uses various energy efficiency measures, tools,

techniques and materials.

Gandaki Province

Another such training, the 8th edition, was successfully conducted in Pokhara from 15 to 17 March 2025, and included 17 participants (11 Architects and 6 Civil Engineers) representing various municipalities across the Gandaki province, Nepal.

The participants analyzed energy-efficient buildings through simulations and case studies, delving into various measures, tools, materials, and techniques to enhance efficiency.



Lumbini Province

The 9th session of a 3-day training programme on Inclusive Energy Efficient Building Design. was held in Bhairahawa from 20 to 22 March 2025, and included 18 participants (6 Architects and 12 Civil Engineers) representing various municipalities across the Lumbini province, Nepal.

The program was formally inaugurated by the President of the Society of Nepalese Architects (SONA), Architect Iswor Joshi, in the esteemed presence of Special Guest Architect Raju Neupane, Director of FLPIU, Bhairahawa, and Engineer Manish Khanal, Head of the Naksha Sakha, Tilottama Municipality.



11.3 Validation workshop for the Green Building Guideline Nepal

The Green Building Guideline Nepal is a comprehensive set of standards and recommendations for sustainable design and construction practices in the country. Developed through a collaborative effort between the Department of Urban Development and Building Construction (DUDBC), the World Bank, the SCGSA under SONA, the guideline aims to promote



environmentally responsible and energy-efficient building practices in Nepal.

Validation workshops was held on 2nd March, 2025 and input from stakeholders were given to ensure that the guideline reflects the needs and priorities of the Nepalese construction industry. Overall, the Green Building Guideline Nepal represents a significant step towards sustainable development in the country. This guideline can help to create a more sustainable and resilient built environment for future generations.



11.4 Trophy Design Competition

SONA Excellence Award Trophy Design Competition was organized and 15 creative entries from architects and architecture students were received. Our jury panel consisting of Ar. Sahidi Joshi, Ar. Rahul Muni Bajracharya and International Jury Ar. Sandeepa Vithanage (Sri Lanka) had a tough time deciding the Top 3 designs out of the submitted designs but finally able to choose the finalists.

The winners were:

- 1.) Prashant Deshar (winner)
- 2.) Rohan Shrestha (Nepal Engineering College) & (Khwopa College of Engineering) (1st Runner up)
- 3.) Anjana Basnet (Himalaya College of Engineering) (2nd Runner up)

SONA
EXCELLENCE AWARD

TROPHY DESIGN COMPETITION
for the annual SONA Excellence Award

Registration Deadline : March 20, 2025

Participation Fee:
NPR 500 for students.
NPR 1,000 for SONA professionals.
NPR 1,500 for non-SONA personnel

CALL FOR ENTRIES
Submit your creative designs

Awards
First Prize: NPR 35,000 cash prize
Second Prize: NPR 15,000 cash prize
Third Prize: NPR 10,000 cash prize
*inclusive of tax

Submission Deadline
April 18, 2025
hardcopy and softcopy

for further details visit: sona.org.np



11.5 ACSR Workshop on Architecture with Marginalized Communities

Ar. Shristina Shrestha, experienced Community Architect from Lumanti Support Group for Shelter, represented Society of Nepalese Architects(SONA) in the ACSR workshop for Marginalized Community in Bangkok, Thailand on 26th-29th April, 2025. The experience and learnings were shared after she came back from the workshop.



11.6 Participation in the IAPEX 2025 Conference

r. Abhishek Mananda Bajracharya, SONA Deputy General Secretary, presenting his paper on Vehicles in the historic core areas of Kathmandu- A case of Kumari Jatra route, in Karachi, Pakistan on 2-4 May, 2025. The IAPEX 2025 Conference was organized by Institute of Architects, Pakistan (IAP) Karachi Chapter.



11.7 Training for Architects on Building Construction Working Procedure) BCWP) & Electronic Building Permit System (e-BPS)

SONA, in partnership with the Department of Urban Development and Building Construction (DUDBC) and JICA-NBCC, hosted a two-day workshop on Building Construction Working Procedure (BCWP) and the Electronic Building Permit System (e-BPS) on 5th and 6th May, 2025 to promote safer, regulated construction. 28 architects actively participated, strengthening their expertise in compliance and safety. Nepal’s earthquake risks Building Code (NNBC)



compliance, yet many constructions deviate due to limited awareness. This training helped bridge knowledge gaps and enforce safety.

11.8 Meeting with the Mayor of Changunarayan Municipality, Bhaktapur



SONA approached the municipality and met Mayor Mr. Jeevan Khatri on 21st May, 2025 and briefed him about the issue in the building permit and pass permit issued by the municipality. We also drew his attention by highlighting the role of architects in building

design and heritage conservation specifically with the fact that the municipality hasn't recruited any architects till date.

The Mayor admitted that there has been an error from their part while drafting the clause. He promised that the clause would be rectified and role of architects to be mentioned. He thanked SONA for highlighting the importance of the role of architects. He also mentioned that he would try to develop a mechanism to recruit architect/s in the municipality and use their expertise in the overall development of the built environment of the municipality.

11.9 MOU with Architecture Schools

SONA Committee on Architecture Education (SCAE) approached for going into MOU with additional architecture schools. The objective of the MOU is to foster collaboration between SONA and Architecture colleges. There were discussions on advancing education standards, encouraging research practices, facilitating student internships, promoting cross-country learning and enhancing collaborative engagements. So far, we have MOU with nine architecture colleges.



11.10 Panel Discussion on: “Multi-disciplinary Nature of Building Projects in Nepal”

SONA organized a session of Multi-Disciplinary Nature of Building Projects in Nepal on 6th June, 2025. This event marked as one of the first kinds with more than 250 allied professionals related to a common field got together to discuss the pertinent issues.

The whole event was divided into two major parts; Session 1: Project Scope, Responsibility and Remuneration and Session 2: Role of Concerned Authorities in the Multidisciplinary



Building Construction Process and Implementation.

11.11 Visit to the Minister of Urban Development Minister

Society of Nepalese Architects (SONA) delegation, led by President Ar. Iswar Joshi, met with Honorable Deputy Prime minister Mr. Prakash Man Singh, on 12th June, 2025 at his residence to request his Ministry of Urban Development (MOUD) to initiate the design competition for the redevelopment of



Bhrikutimandap area which has been in the priority list of the Ministry for the new Fiscal Year's (FY 82/83) accomplishments.

SONA President handed over the Letter of Memorandum to the Honorable Minister which clearly explains the socio-cultural importance of Bhrikutimandap and also as one of the largest open spaces of Kathmandu and it should retain its originality as the lungs of the city but with prevailing issues, its major redevelopment is the need of an hour. Honorable Minister Singh has assured SONA that the Ministry would do whatever it takes to make Bhrikutimandap a better place where the people from different walks of life could happily use it!

PS: SONA had even submitted a proposal to KMC to assist in the design competition for the redevelopment plans of Bhrikutimandap in January 2024 but couldn't get materialized due to various reasons.

11.12 First Architectural Conservation and Planning Studio Exhibition-2025

Society of Nepalese Architects (SONA) in collaboration with different colleges organized a special one-day **Open Exhibition and Interaction Session** showcasing the work of conservation and planning studios from architecture colleges across Nepal at Institute of Engineering Pulchowk Campus on 4th July, 2025. Twelve of the seventeen architecture colleges



in Nepal offering undergraduate programs are actively participated in this exhibition, presenting the culmination of their students' dedicated work. The remaining five colleges participated as observer colleges.

The Mayor of Lalitpur Metropolitan City Mr. Chiribabu Maharjan inaugurated the event. The Dean of Institute of Engineering Dr. Sushil Bahadur Bajracharya also graced the exhibition. In addition, there were students and faculty from all architecture schools visiting the exhibition and attending the panel discussion. The panel discussion had all student speakers where they shared their experiences on their studio projects specifically the planning and conservation project.

11.13 Joint Design studio between Eranad Knowledge City College of Architecture, Kerala India and Himalaya College of Engineering, Lalitpur Nepal

Society of Nepalese Architects (SONA) collaborated with Himalaya College of Engineering for the initiative to host Eranad Knowledge City College of Architecture, Kerala India for a week long urban design and conservation studio in the historic core of area of Patan, Lalitpur. 45 students and 5 faculty from the host college, 56 students and 2 faculty from the visiting college participated in the vigorous studio and site work from 3rd August to 8th August, 2025. This event is one of the first of this kind mediated by SONA Committee on Architecture Education as part of the “cross country collaboration.”



12 KEY ISSUES FACED BY NEPALESE ARCHITECTS

Nepalese architecture fraternity is in a very peculiar stage. Architects in one hand are getting good jobs but in a larger context, the architecture job is not satisfactory. It is also very pertinent to mention that the Nepalese architecture is struggling to identify its own status on the ground. It is in this junction that Society of Nepalese architects is working towards the betterment of architecture fraternity, architect as an individual and practice.

13 RESOURCES OF THE INSTITUTE

SONA owns a 500 sq.ft. fully furnished office space in the central part of Kathmandu. We have recently renovated the office space. SONA is looking for some alternative infrastructure extension considering the need of the day. Soon after resuming office, our President, Ar. Iswar Lal Joshi have already initiated works to find a suitable space for SONA. He has been working on various plans which are still under discussion. Recently we renovated our office to give it a new fresh look.

14 SONA FOR ARCASIA RESOLUTIONS

SONA, 15th EC is committed to all the resolutions that are unanimously passed through the council of ARCASIA. SONA has regularly participated in all the ARCASIA events and have contributed through all its knowledge and available resources through sub-committees and executive committee. ARCASIA is a platform for sharing information, updating on the scenario relating to architecture and getting to know each other in the wider arena from where there is lots to learn if given the interest as is visible through the five sub committees. It's all give and take so one has to be super active and aware of all that's happening and speak out. A silent observer is somehow lost in the crowd. So, we need to enthuse our members to interact during the committee meetings and ask questions, be heard and noticed as the voice of SONA.

15 PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Along with further above-mentioned agendas, some of the major tasks that the executive committee intend to achieve are as follows:

1. Establishment of the Council of Architects- needs legislative endorsement from parliament. SONA has regularly been lobbying for the same in various platforms.
2. Formalizing Council of Presidents (Past Presidents of SONA) through the AGM.
3. Establishment of well-equipped infrastructure of SONA with necessary amenities like having SONA's own office building with parking and space to rent out for its financial sustainability. SONA legislation has been amended to support this plan.

16 AGENDA FOR ARCASIA COUNCIL

1. Promotion of cross-culture knowledge through various professional and student exchange.
2. Establishment of Research fund from ARCASIA to promote indigenous knowledge of architecture in ASIAN Architecture world.
3. Promotion of Cross-national architecture practice, internship and training
4. Implementation of CPD
5. Activities to request the Government of Nepal in the formation of Architects' Council of Nepal