

Embargoed: 00:01 Monday 30 April 2012

## Students' creativity regenerates east London for Olympics



Hundreds of art, architecture and design students from London Metropolitan University are working to regenerate Aldgate and surrounding quarters in time for the Olympics.

'The Aldgate Project' has seen more than 400 students from the Faculty of Architecture and Spatial Design and the Sir John Cass Faculty of Art, Media and Design work with local stakeholders in 20 separate creative projects.

The Project is the biggest of its kind in the history of London Met, and responds to High Street 2012, the project to improve the A11/118 route between Aldgate and Stratford.

As Universities Week 2012 commences (30 April – 7 May), a new report launched today\* features The Aldgate Project as an exemplar of university engagement with community regeneration. The Aldgate Project was also given a Bronze Medal for the 'Award for Creative Cultural Project' at the recent Podium Awards.

Anne Markey, Head of the Faculty of Architecture Projects Office, said:  
"The success of the Project can be measured by the enthusiasm of influential stakeholders to collaborate, including the boroughs of Tower Hamlets and Haringey, The City of London Corporation, East End Homes, Toynbee Hall, Providence Row homeless charity and Whitechapel Gallery."

All 20 projects will be represented in a devoted show as part of the annual student exhibitions in June 2012. Some of these include:

- Students producing short animations to be projected onto the walls of an otherwise somber façade of an east end housing estate.
- An architecture student working with Providence Row to design an urban garden in the courtyard and on the rooftop of the charity's buildings.
- 'The Walk of Art', designed by Fine Art students, using a combination of way-finding and signage systems to offer visitors a structured route exploring the local artist community.
- Urban Design students have done detailed surveys of local high streets, leading to a number of design propositions discussed with local councils, including a summer music festival in Tottenham.
- A series of mobile ethnographic instruments created by architecture students to engage City workers in conversations about themselves.

A new website created by the University's Wow Agency has just been launched to support and document the Aldgate Project: [www.aldgateproject.org](http://www.aldgateproject.org)

"The site introduces the Project and its aspirations", said Anne. "It acts as an archive and point of information for the various events that have been organised as part of the project, such as a lecture series, guided design walks and a cross-faculty exhibition of work that was held in February.

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#### **Notes to editors:**

##### **The Aldgate Project**

The Aldgate Project sees 20 cross-disciplinary projects running in the academic year 2011-2012. A wide range of disciplines are taking part in the project, such as architecture, fine art, jewellery, furniture design, textiles design and animation. Tutors and students are carrying out projects that work with local community groups, charities and stakeholders in the Aldgate area. All the individual projects seek to engage with local groups, expanding beyond the confines of the studio space and setting out to see the Faculty's being better connected with the surrounding area of Aldgate and Whitechapel.

<http://aldgateproject.org>

**\*For Universities Week 2012** (30 April – 7 May), a new report launched today shows London Metropolitan University's involvement in the UK's Olympic and Paralympic Games contribution. The report, *Olympic and Paralympic Games: The impact of universities*, demonstrates the diverse contribution that universities are making to the 2012 Games, the overall impact on the UK sports industry and the work institutions and academics are doing around the Cultural Olympiad and 2012 legacy programme. London Met is proud to be included in this report which showcases its Aldgate Project as well as posters designed by London Met staff and alumni for the Paralympic Games. The report is available on request from: [universitiesweek@fourcommunications.com](mailto:universitiesweek@fourcommunications.com) and later for download from [www.universitiesweek.org.uk](http://www.universitiesweek.org.uk)

**London Metropolitan University** has been providing affordable quality education in London since 1848. The average starting salary of London Met graduates is now well above the UK average (DLHE, 2011). London Met has been ranked among the best universities in the country in terms of giving students the best “added-value” in helping them to secure well-paid jobs (Parthenon 2011).

[www.londonmet.ac.uk](http://www.londonmet.ac.uk)

### **The Wow Agency**

The ASD Projects Office has worked with Alan Stuart, project manager of the digital design WOW Agency based in London Met’s Faculty of Computing and talented young designer and London Met student James Holt to design the dedicated website.

<http://thewowagency.co.uk>

### **The Podium Awards**

The Podium Awards is a prestigious one-off celebration recognising the vital role colleges and universities across the UK have played in delivering the London 2012 Games.

[www.podiumawards2012.com](http://www.podiumawards2012.com)

**Photos (top of page):** Architecture of Multiple Authorship, Torange Khonsari and Sandra Denicke-Polcher, December 2011

**Attachment:** Work in Progress exhibition, February 2012

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