

CHALLENGE FOR THE URBAN AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT 2017

The Challenge for the Urban and Built Environment (CUBE) is an annual workshop and competition for junior college and polytechnic students. It enables participants to delve into the intricacies of planning and urban design for Singapore and gain first-hand experience as urban planners. Organised by the URA since 2009, the workshop aims to inspire a future generation of architects and urban planners.

Last year's CUBE student workshop and competition was held at the URA Centre from 20 to 24 November 2017. Over 145 students from 16 junior colleges and polytechnics were tasked to develop the Mei Chin Estate as the new "heart" of Queenstown. The objectives include developing integrated developments (residential, sports amenities, commercial facilities) with a network of public spaces (parks and communal facilities) that serve as community nodes to attract local residents, as well as the broader Singaporean community who are keen to take part in communal activities in the district.

Participants were guided throughout the workshop by young facilitators from local tertiary institutions and mentors from the professional industry. Guest lecturers from our university partners, the National University of Singapore (NUS) and Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD), introduced concepts of sustainable urban planning and architecture to the students. These budding urban planners worked diligently to conceptualise, refine and present their proposed vision statements, master plans and site models to a critique panel that comprised representatives from NUS, SUTD, URA and the professional industry.

For more information on CUBE, please visit <https://www.facebook.com/CUBEStudentWorkshop>.

CUBE Exhibition

Date: 22 March to 27 April 2018

Venue: The URA Centre Atrium
45 Maxwell Road, Singapore 069118
Admission is free

Time: Mondays to Fridays, 8.30am to 7pm
Saturdays, 8.30am to 5pm
Closed on Sundays and Public Holidays

Top Three Winning Teams (in alphabetical order)

Muah Chee Mei Chin
By Jurong Junior College



When bland glutinous rice balls mix with crunchy peanuts and tantalising sugar, the traditional local delight, *muah chee* is created. The sticky rice balls symbolise the hub's amenities that bring people—the peanuts—together. This is what we envision Mei Chin to be: Queenstown residents forming a closely-knit community via our “Muah Chee Mei Chin” community hub.

We introduced functions attractive to the ageing Queenstown community and their families, and scattered them around Mei Chin, just like how *muah chee* is cut into bite-sized pieces. While it may seem that the scattering will divide the community, it actually encourages people to move around the site and engage in interactions among the community that are not just plentiful but also varied, like how peanuts blend evenly with rice balls in *muah chee*.

Muah chee is a traditional dish, but it is fading in popularity amongst the younger generation, just like the Mei Chin neighbourhood. We decided to retain the character of Queenstown by adaptively reusing existing historical buildings for modern functions, and link them with sky bridges to form a trail. In this way, heritage becomes imbued with the daily lives of the community, revitalising the sleepy neighbourhood.

Bridging our past and future By River Valley High School



Bridging our past and future

1. Introduce vibrancy while preserving some of its quiet nature
2. Increase connectivity of old and new residents
3. Integrating the old identity of Queenstown with its new

With the aim to integrate current and future residents, we proposed a site that has high connectivity which promotes interaction between both parties while preserving the rich heritage of Queenstown.

A network of cycling and jogging tracks which also acts as a pedestrian path is thoughtfully designed to provide high connectivity within and beyond the site, bridging people in and out of the sit. This is especially important in bridging elderly there and newer residents.

To maximise use of the canal, it will be integrated into the community, serving as communal spaces and providing a different element of nature.

Heartbeat@Mei Chin: To Rejuvenate Mei Chin into a Vibrant Heartware that Creates a Culture of Healthy Living
By Singapore Polytechnic



To reinvigorate Mei Chin, a former regional hub turned dull backwater, our project envisions a heart to draw residents to a core, then branching out through arteries and veins, and with a heartbeat-like rhythm.

At the core lies a hub – a confluent open plaza where people mingle, linked to the rest of the site and areas beyond, and tied to our concept of healthy living. With everything connected down the middle, a greater community spirit is fostered.

With people in a community analogous to blood in the body –vital for survival and full of life –‘blood vessels ‘guide people through the site, starting and ending from the core.

A heartbeat is established through high-and low-pressure nodes throughout the site, serving the six tenets of healthy living: the social, emotional, mental, physical, spiritual and environmental, creating an ebb and flow of energy. This fluctuation generates vibrancy in residents’ lives.

Capitalizing on the proximity of the rail corridor and park connectors, extensive greenery and a central stadium encourage healthy living through exercise and public spaces, allowing people of all ages, both within and beyond Mei Chin, to interact and forge greater community bonds.

Other award winners:

Merits

- Ngee Ann Polytechnic
- St. Andrew's Junior College
- Temasek Junior College

Special Mentions

- Anglo-Chinese Junior College
- Catholic Junior College
- Dunman High School
- Hwa Chong Institution
- Millennia Institute
- National Junior College
- Republic Polytechnic
- Temasek Polytechnic
- Victoria Junior College
- Yishun Junior College