

## > THE UIA AND RIAI LAUNCH THE 'FRIENDLY AND INCLUSIVE SPACES' AWARDS 2017



## FRIENDLY AND INCLUSIVE SPACES AWARDS

The International Union of Architects (UIA) has launched the second edition of the 'Friendly and Inclusive Spaces' Awards. The Awards recognise and promote inclusive design – from buildings and public spaces to research – and are open to all architect members of UIA member sections. Entries can be submitted online, until 20 December 2016, at [uiafriendlyspaces.awardsplatform.com/](http://uiafriendlyspaces.awardsplatform.com/).

The UIA Friendly and Inclusive Spaces Awards are being administered by the RIAI. An international expert jury will short-list projects from around the world and the category winners will be announced the UIA World Congress in Seoul, South Korea, in September 2017.

RIAI President **Carole Pollard** said the RIAI was delighted to support this prestigious international award and the important

work of the UIA's Architecture for All work programme: "The RIAI champions quality design and believes that a quality built environment benefits all our lives. The development of 'Friendly and Inclusive Spaces' should not be seen as an aspiration but understood as a principle for relevant and sustainable buildings and public spaces.

Demographic projections show that the percentage of the world's population for people over 65 will increase from 8% in 2015 to 16% in 2050. This creates serious challenges for architects and policy makers and we believe that these Awards will contribute to the debates by highlighting best practice from around the world.

We look forward to seeing many exciting and innovative entries for these awards from around the globe and from Irish architects."

### The International Jury is:

**Vassilis Sgoutas**, Greece, Past President UIA (Jury Chairman)

**Krzysztof Ingarden**, Poland, (Medal Winner Durban 2014)

**Krzysztof Chwalibog**, Poland, Co-Director UIA Architecture for All WP

**Fionnuala Rogerson**, Ireland, Co-Director UIA Architecture for All Work WP:

**Joseph Kwan**, Hong Kong, Co-ordinator, UIA Region IV Architecture for All WP

**Eduardo Elkouss**, Spain, Co-ordinator Region III UIA Architecture for All WP

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## INTERVIEW WITH FIONNUALA ROGERSON, CO-DIRECTOR OF THE UIA'S ARCHITECTURE FOR ALL WORK PROGRAMME

**AI:** Fionnuala, tell us about the UIA Friendly and Inclusive Spaces Awards and why they were created?

**FR:** The UIA Friendly and Inclusive Spaces Awards is an initiative of the UIA Architecture for All Work Programme which works to promote quality in architecture that is accessible to all. In 2014 the Awards expanded and became a global award presented every three years at the UIA triennial World Congress of Architects. The purpose of the Awards is to acknowledge and promote good architecture that has clearly demonstrated a human centred design approach, acknowledging cultural and human diversity – places that not only look but feel good and can be used and enjoyed by everyone.

**AI:** How did you become interested in universal design and why do you find it so rewarding?

**FR:** My interest in the physical accessibility of the built environment has grown over the years and I now believe that good

architecture can only be good if it takes full account of everyone that might use it. You can't overestimate the impact of good design on health and well-being, and how well designed buildings and places can engender a sense of enjoyment and of belonging. This can transform people's lives.

**AI:** How has Irish architecture changed its approach to sustainable buildings and spaces and the walkability of our towns and cities.

**FR:** There is a much greater awareness now amongst architects and society in general about the importance of sustainability at all levels, not just environmental but also economic and social sustainability. Social sustainability is perhaps the least well understood. It includes responsible architecture that can contribute to placemaking, to human rights and to social justice. The three strands of sustainability are really interconnected. Being able to access and enjoy our towns and urban centres is facilitated by

better transport infrastructure, better urban design and better buildings. Walkability, in the technical sense, relates to the quality of our urban spaces, our pavements, places to stop and rest, the ease with which we can orientate ourselves regardless of whether we have a physical or cognitive impairment, or just don't speak the same language as everyone else.

**AI:** Why are these awards important?

**FR:** Firstly they reward and acknowledge good design that is accessible to everyone. They also provide an opportunity to showcase Irish architecture on a global stage. Finally we believe that the shortlisted projects, which will be published on-line, will become a well-used resource and inspiration for architects worldwide when considering what constitutes 'universal design'.

**AI:** What buildings qualify and how can people enter?



**FR:** The awards are open to all architects who are members of UIA member sections. Projects that have been completed since November 2013 qualify. These include not just new buildings but also public spaces and adaptive/reuse of existing buildings and of historic buildings. There is also a special category for architect-led research, completed since November 2013, which contributes in a practical way to improved quality of life through the design of the built environment. It's very easy to enter. Entries can be submitted on-line through [uiafriendlyspaces.awardsplatform.com/](http://uiafriendlyspaces.awardsplatform.com/). You can save and edit your entries right up to the final deadline of the 20th December 2016.