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# THE WOMEN'S BUILDING

International Design Competition

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# INTRODUCTION

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NoVo Foundation, in collaboration with the Goren Group, has been awarded the historic opportunity to transform an abandoned women's prison in West Chelsea into a new global hub for the girls' and women's rights movement.

The former Bayview Correctional Facility will be reborn as The Women's Building: a home for social justice leaders working to ensure that all women and girls can live free from violence, poverty, and discrimination. More than just a workplace, it will be a vertical neighborhood, designed to foster serendipitous interactions, build partnerships, create networks, and grow sustainable solutions.

Goren Group, a woman-owned and operated real estate development company, will be developing the property on behalf of NoVo Foundation. The building was originally designed in 1931 as a YMCA for merchant sailors and is characterized by its distinctive masonry work, terra cotta detailing, and nautical references.

Goren Group and the design team will work closely with New York's State Historic Preservation Office to preserve and restore historical elements of the building.

Throughout the development process, we have a significant intention to engage as many women as possible, in every role and at every level. We will nurture talent, provide training, create apprenticeships, and promote qualified women to supervisory roles. Along with developing the building, our goal is to provide meaningful job opportunities for skilled women, create a community of builders, and encourage the next generation of women developers, designers, and tradeswomen.

The Women's Building project will provide an inspiring example of women working together to build a place where organizations advocating for the rights of girls and women can share resources, strengthen connections, and cultivate community.

## GOREN GROUP

Goren Group is a registered WBE woman-owned and operated real estate development and investment company devoted to making buildings that create change and foster community. Founded in 2007 by Lela Goren, Goren Group develops complex, significant, and historic buildings with entrepreneurial finesse and an unwavering commitment to social engagement. Learn more at [www.thegorengroup.com](http://www.thegorengroup.com)

## NOVO FOUNDATION

NoVo Foundation is dedicated to building a more just and balanced world. Founded in 2006 by Jennifer and Peter Buffett, NoVo has become one of the largest private foundations in the world to support initiatives focused explicitly on girls and women. It also works to advance social and emotional learning and promote local living economies. Across all of its work, NoVo Foundation supports the development of capacities in people—individually and collectively—to help create a world based on mutual respect, collaboration, and love. Learn more at [www.novofoundation.org](http://www.novofoundation.org).

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# INVITATION

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This two-stage competition is open to professionals of all design fields, with a special emphasis on women architects from diverse and traditionally underrepresented backgrounds.

All interested candidates are encouraged to submit qualifications.

The objective of this competition is to select the Design Architect and/or Architect of Record for The Women's Building (TWB). As such, entrants are encouraged to limit their team to a single practitioner, firm, or core group of essential architectural collaborators. The winning entrant will have the opportunity to work with NoVo Foundation and the Goren Group to assemble a team of consulting engineers and professionals during the contract negotiations process.

Women practicing in allied design professions are encouraged to indicate their interest in the project by registering on the **CONSULTANTS & TRADES** page.

Online registration is open from **November 18, 2015 to January 6, 2016**.

Phase I seeks entrant qualifications for consideration.

Selected candidates from Phase I will be invited to participate in the Phase II funded Design Competition.

## SELECTION COMMITTEE

The Selection Committee will be announced on December 15, 2015 and will be composed of leading women in architecture, arts, and design, as well as activists in the girls' and women's rights movement.

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# PROJECT BRIEF

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The former Bayview Correctional Facility at 550 West 20th Street consists of two adjoining buildings, an eight-story building, and a six-story annex, which together comprise approximately 110,000 square feet. The building was built in 1931 as a Seamen's House YMCA, a place for merchant sailors to stay while their ships were docked in New York harbor.

From 1967 through 1974, the facility was utilized as a residential treatment center operated by the Narcotic Addition Control Commission (NACC). In 1974, operation was transferred to the Department of Correctional Services and the facility was reclassified as a medium security work release facility for women. The roof was used for outdoor recreation and related activities and is equipped with a wraparound chain-link enclosure. The building was evacuated during Hurricane Sandy and has remained empty since 2012.

The approximately 80,000-square-foot main building retains some architectural detail from its early days, and will be gut-renovated in association with New York's State Historic Preservation Office to preserve and restore historical elements of the building. The approximately 30,000-square-foot annex will be completely torn down, and replaced with ground-up, new construction of approximately the same square footage.

The site is located in the Manhattan neighborhood of West Chelsea and is within walking distance of residential condominiums, art galleries, the Chelsea Piers Sports Center, the Chelsea Waterside Park, the Chelsea Dog Run Park, the Hudson River Park, the High Line elevated linear park, the NYC headquarters of Google, and the international corporate headquarters of InterActiveCorp.

Once completed, The Women's Building will serve as a hub of activism and engagement, offering leaders working on behalf of girls and women the space, resources, and support they need to drive critical change. The leadership, talent, and participation of women will be integral to the project at every stage, from planning through design and construction.

The vision for the building will be developed in collaboration with women's groups in New York, nationwide, and globally. The program may include the following elements: atrium; art gallery; restaurant/café; auditorium/performance space; childcare facilities; adolescent girls' wellness center; offices and meeting rooms; gardens and event space on the roof.

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# PROCESS & GUIDELINES

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Based on the selection criteria and the information provided by the Statement of Qualification forms, the Selection Committee will evaluate each applicant's relevant experience and qualifications, current workload, past performance, and prior projects. Primary considerations will include:

**A. Experience and Ability:** prior work on mixed-use, historic renovations, urban infill, and other similar complex projects.

**B. Design Ability:** design philosophy; sensitivity to site, context, and aesthetic appeal.

**C. Affinity with The Women's Building Mission.**

**D. Ability to Service the Project:** including familiarity with NYC building code, historic preservation requirements, LEED, and other technical requirements. It may also factor the candidate's proximity to the project and availability for meetings and site visits.

After the Selection Committee discusses the merits of each application, it will rate the applicants on each of the above considerations. The applicant's individual scores will be averaged, and a composite score will be assigned. The Selection Committee will identify up to 10 shortlisted candidates from the submitted Request for Qualification responses for Phase II of the competition. Each shortlisted candidate who agrees to participate in Phase II will be given approximately six weeks to complete their competition concept submissions. Shortlisted candidates will be provided a \$10,000 stipend for their submission.

Shortlist submission requirements will be limited to two (2) 30" X 42" board mounted floor plans, site plan, building sections (two minimum), and interior renderings (three minimum). Candidates should also submit a brief description of their design philosophy for the project and the challenges and opportunities they see, relative to the adaptive reuse of the existing building, in achieving their goals for the project. All submission entries will remain the property of NoVo Foundation.

Each shortlisted candidate will be provided with copies of the TWB program and concept diagrams as proposed to date, a project budget and cost estimate based upon that concept, historic preservation scope requirements, relevant portions of the existing building's original construction documents, a site survey, and a draft architectural services agreement. The shortlisted candidates will be allowed to access the existing facility, subject to prior arrangement with NoVo Foundation and Empire State Development. Shortlisted candidates are also expected to provide a fee proposal and schedule of hourly rates based upon the conceptual project budget.

Based on the review of the competition entries, one or more of the shortlisted architect(s) or project team(s) may be invited to present to the Selection Committee in person. If selected, each project architect or team will be provided up to \$5,000 as a travel stipend.

The selected architect or team will then be invited to engage in contract negotiations as the appointed Design Architect and/or Architect of Record for the project, to provide architectural services including schematic design, design development, construction documents, and construction administration. The preliminary timeline for the project forecasts completion of construction documents in the spring of 2017 and completion of construction in early 2019.

# TIMELINE



NOVEMBER 18, 2015	Competition Announcement and Online Registration Opens
DECEMBER 9, 2015	Deadline for Submission of Questions
DECEMBER 23, 2015	Q&A Posted to Website
JANUARY 6, 2016	Registration and Phase I Qualifications Submission Deadline
MARCH 2, 2016	Announcement of Shortlist & Distribution of RFP/Design Competition Brief
MARCH 9, 2016 to MARCH 16, 2016	Site Visit for Shortlist Candidates
APRIL 20, 2016	Phase II Proposal Submission Deadline
MAY 30, 2016 to JUNE 8, 2016	Interviews with Finalists
JUNE 30, 2016	Selected Architect Announced
JULY 15, 2016	Online Presentation of Winning Proposal