



JOB DESCRIPTION :

DIRECTOR OF ECOLE SPECIALE D'ARCHITECTURE

The École Spéciale d'Architecture is hiring its Director !

1. The School's Background

The École Spéciale d'Architecture is the first private school of Architecture in France, founded in 1866. As an establishment of higher education and research, this association, committed to public utility since 1870 is authorized to issue State-recognized degrees, at executive, undergraduate and postgraduate levels, under the dual supervision of the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MESRI). The school's program of study has been assessed and validated by the High Council for Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (HCÉRES) and approved by the National Council of higher education and research (CNESER) from the current period to the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year.

In the landscape of architecture schools, the specificity of the École Spéciale d'Architecture is characterized by at least four singularities:

- First and foremost, **it is a school of academic freedom**, throughout its diversified teaching practices and ways of conceiving architecture. **It is Special because it is experimental** : the educational program is collectively designed and built, debated, tested, regularly renewed, crossing the fields of art and creation with those of construction and digital, while maintaining a demanding educational offer within the Bachelor-Masters-Doctorate system in accordance with the European Higher Education Area and the Bologna process.
- **It is a highly international school** in terms of its attractiveness. At the start of the school year in September 2021, the school welcomed 844 students in general and continuing education, including 455 undergraduate students, 204 postgraduate students and 137 students enrolled in the "certification as full service leader of the design-build process" (HMONP) program. Students of foreign nationalities represented 30% of the students admitted. The school is characterized by both its diversity of nationalities from across the world and a diversified pedagogical framework underlined by semester exchanges and international partnerships around major educational establishments.
- **It is a school of great flexibility in its ability to constantly reinvent itself**, to challenge its teaching methods, its research and its modus operandi. It has numerous networks, actively mobilizing teachers and visiting professors. The School Project was collectively initiated in 2015 thanks to the work undertaken by the thematic commissions, thus mobilizing the entire teaching body, students and the administrative staff.
- **It is a school whose livelihood is also linked to its associative status**, which is reflected in its governance, the dynamics of its student societies and the large and recognized international network of its alumni (former students).

The École Spéciale is located in the heart of Paris in its historic buildings, at the 254-266 Boulevard Raspail, on an exceptional site shared with the Camondo School, with which a strong relationship has been established.

Since 2015, ESA has also been committed to developing educational partnerships with other higher education institutions. The dual-degree of Engineer - Architect, opened with ESTP PARIS - France's leading Civil Engineering School - is therefore very attractive, on both the site of ESA Paris and the ESTP Paris - Cachan campus.

The École Spéciale also carries out regional development projects, with the implementation, in 2020, of a bachelor's degree in Architecture and Engineering in partnership with ESTP-Paris on the ESTP campus in Troyes.

Finally, the School is working on a major project looking forward to developing its educational program in Dijon, in collaboration with local partnerships.

The school relies on an institutional development contract signed with the State for the multiannual period of 2020-2024, in accordance with its qualification as a private establishment of higher education committed to public benefit (EESPIG).

2. The new director will face major challenges

The Director is responsible for the development and proper functioning of the School. They will have to develop a strategic vision for ESA, by mobilizing the school's teaching and administrative teams in collaboration with the student representatives.

The role's main tasks will be:

- **To stimulate and support a new pedagogical dynamic**, by means of conceiving the teaching framework for a transversal School in the 21st century. This project should encourage the creation of a framework and a culture of the teaching of architecture which remains strongly plural, without enacting the dominance of a subject area, therefore equally supporting a range of fields including research, landscape, ecology, professionalism, materiality as well as constructive experimentation. The essential issues related to ecological and digital transitions to climatic upheavals have constantly increased in recent years and regularly question the way the School could take stock of these challenges more effectively. The preparation and signing of the next four-year contract provides an excellent framework for reflection and action, along with the contribution that ESA wishes to make to the national ENSA network. Other major issues need to be addressed: the HMONP diploma, which is one of the most recognized in France due to its strong BIM approach defined in this training, the development of dual degrees and the question of professional training further in life.
- **To establish and consolidate the institutional foundations and the governance** bodies of the School, in line with the recommendations of its supervisory authorities and its associative DNA. ESA is going to adopt new articles and new rules of procedure with the ambition to reconcile the School's mission as an institution of higher education and research with its status as a private Recognized Public Utility Association (ARUP).

- **Seeking to strengthen the School's dynamic of reinventing** the field of research, beyond its transcription into its educational programs. A research model specific to the School is expected to be established (living lab, chair). The flexibility of the School is a very powerful asset for developing such perspectives.

- **To deepen and renew the territorial and international dimension of the School.** Even though the School is already firmly established in the Greater Paris region, the Dijon project is an extraordinary opportunity to deploy a new educational offer in other territories. The School also has a card to play at the international scale, by strengthening its historical partnerships and its collaborations with specific establishments, such as the *Technischen Universität München*, the *Architectural Institute of Prague*, the *Universidade de Coimbra* and, beyond Europe, with the *National University of Singapore*, the *Kyoto Seika University*, the *Universidad Iberoamericana* in Mexico, even by creating new opportunities with the opening of international degrees.

To assume these responsibilities, the school director is expected to have a dynamic personality and to be passionate about the development of the School by having:

- **A real vision of programmatic orientations that should be promoted in institutional as well as educational matters, based on a dynamic of collaborative work.** These targeted actions should be in phase with the current evolution architecture and handled with inventiveness and originality.

- **An ability to assert themselves as a privileged interlocutor of the School's supervisory authorities and different stakeholders**, both nationally and internationally. Ability to pursue the work on contractual relations regarding the projects on which the School is already engaged. The vision of the School of tomorrow and its evolution will become the priorities of the future director, who is expected to achieve this vision using their knowledge and skills to design the necessary projects.

- **A mastery of the fields of architecture and urban planning**, with a focus on the key challenges of our time.

- **A good knowledge of the spectrum of National Schools of Higher Education in Architecture (ENSA)** and the uniqueness of the Ecole Spéciale d'Architecture.

- **A solid administrative and financial experience**, a record of academic experience and knowledge of the challenges of innovative research strategies.

- **A real quality of management and academic leadership** by mentoring and supporting as needed the different bodies of the school: teachers, students, associations and study commissions. They will have to demonstrate an ability to mobilize, animate and support a collective school vision.

- **An important ability to listen, communicate**, and to involve in the social dialogue specific to the school.

- **An excellent command of the French language**, both written and spoken is essential. Fluency in foreign languages, in addition to English, will be an asset.

The school management is located at 254 Raspail Boulevard, in Paris, in the school premises.

The director assumes a leadership of around 20 people including teachers, administrative and technical staff. They are accountable to the executive board, which they attend, in accordance with the school's articles which are being amended in accordance with the Recognized Public Utility Association (ARUP).

This job offering is for a full-time position, for a renewable 4 year contract. This private law contract follows the Collective Bargaining Agreement for independent private education (OJ of 28 August 2008).

The compensation will be negotiated in regards to the experience and age of the candidate.

3. How to Apply :

Please apply by email to candidature_direction@esa-paris.net stating the job title in the subject heading. The email should be sent to the attention of the President of the Executive Board.

Please include in your application:

- Full CV
- A detailed covering letter/email presenting an overall strategic vision for the École Spéciale d'Architecture that you stand for.

The emails should be issued before the closing date : 31st May 2022.

If you have any questions regarding this offer, please send an email to candidature_direction@esa-paris.net

Thank you for your interest in the École Spéciale d'Architecture and this role