

MAYOR OF LONDON

ILLUMINATED
RIVER
FOUNDATION

news release

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MAYOR OF LONDON CALLS FOR ARTISTS TO LIGHT UP THE RIVER THAMES BRIDGES AT NIGHT

- **Ambitious public art project to span 17 of London's most celebrated bridges, from Albert Bridge to Tower Bridge**
- **World's artists, designers, engineers, architects and technologists invited to participate**

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, is calling on the world's brightest minds to come up with ideas to create a permanent light art installation, extending across 17 bridges that span the Thames between Albert Bridge in Chelsea and Tower Bridge in the City.

Today, a global search begins for a team to come together and create *The Illuminated River*, an elegant and charismatic light installation for London's celebrated bridges, harnessing the most innovative, green and sustainable technologies. Breathing new life into the river each evening, the project will be the world's longest free, permanent outdoor river gallery, creating a ribbon of light through the city at night and revitalising public spaces along the river's banks.

The Mayor has made protecting and promoting London's position as a capital of culture one of his priorities. The Illuminated River will encourage new investment, increase use of the river, bridges and riverbanks at night and strengthen partnerships across the public realm between the public and private sector landlords. It will encourage the expansion of a vibrant night-time economy, something the Mayor is keen to support through plans to appoint a Night Czar, to help protect London's live music venues, clubs and pubs, and the introduction of a 24-hour weekend Tube service on key lines from August.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said: "This is a really exciting opportunity to breathe new life through the heart of London each night in a new, permanent, fluid light art installation across the capital's historic bridges. It will throw a spotlight on the river and its banks, and extend their daytime bustle and buzz into the darker hours, supporting London's burgeoning

night-time economy. A dazzling, free outdoor art gallery, for Londoners and all of our visitors to enjoy would encourage new investment and promote our great city to the rest of the world. With the right design, we can remind the world that London continues to be the global leader in innovation, sustainability and artistic creativity.”

Shortlisted competitors will be asked to create the most forward-thinking and environmentally friendly designs, enhancing London’s status as a low-carbon beacon and a world leader in cutting edge technology and engineering. Building on London’s Olympic and Paralympic Legacy, the Illuminated River will complete the technical infrastructure upgrade, which began with Tower Bridge in 2012, when a new world-class, energy-efficient lighting scheme lit up the attraction with a series of light shows to celebrate the Games.

The Illuminated River International Design Competition is commissioned by a new charity, The Illuminated River Foundation, supported by The Rothschild Foundation. The project has been developed collaboratively by a number of organisations with responsibility for the bridges and the river, including The City of London; the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea; Network Rail; the Port of London Authority; Transport for London and Westminster Council.

Mark Boleat, Policy Chairman at the City of London Corporation, said: “This project will transform London’s historic river and the City of London Corporation is very proud to play a part in making it happen. We want the City of London to be at the heart of what looks likely to be the largest art project of its kind in the world.”

Hannah Rothschild, Chair of the Illuminated River Foundation, said: “Even by London’s standards, this project is unprecedented in boldness and imagination: the opportunity to influence and transform the look, identity and experience of the world’s greatest city.

“We’re looking for the finest artists, architects, designers, engineers, technologists and specialists to work together to help realise this exciting ambition.

“What matters is bold and innovative thinking to put the art back into London’s greatest artery.”

The 17 bridges, which stand as monuments to London’s history and symbols of its future, as well as vital thoroughfares for the city, are, travelling West to East:

Albert Bridge, 1873
Chelsea Bridge, 1937
Grosvenor Bridge, 1859
Nine Elms Bridge (in development)
Vauxhall Bridge, 1906
Lambeth Bridge, 1932
Westminster Bridge, 1862
Hungerford Bridge, 1864 and Jubilee Bridge, 2002
Waterloo Bridge, 1945
The Garden Bridge (in development)
Blackfriars Bridge, 1869
Blackfriars Railway Bridge, 1886
Millennium Bridge, 2002
Southwark Bridge, 1921

Cannon Street Railway Bridge, 1866/1982
London Bridge, 1973
Tower Bridge, 1894

The Jury for the Illuminated River International Design Competition is: Lord Rothschild OM GBE, Chairman of RIT Capital Partners plc, Chairman of the Rothschild Foundation, philanthropist, notably in the arts, and the Rothschild family member responsible for Waddesdon Manor. Hannah Rothschild, Chair of The Illuminated River Foundation, Chair of the National Gallery Board of Trustees, writer and film-maker. Malcolm Reading, Professional Chair, Architect and Competition Director, Professor Ricky Burdett, Professor of Urban Studies and Director, LSE Cities and Urban Age. Lucy Musgrave, Director Publica, Ralph Rugoff, Director, Hayward Gallery, Justine Simons OBE, Head of Culture, Mayor of London.

The shortlisted schemes will go on show in a public exhibition at the end of the year, after which a winner will be announced.

For full details of how to enter the competition, please see the **Search Statement** available on the competition website at: <https://competitions.malcolmreading.co.uk/illuminatedriver>

www.illuminatedriver.london

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Notes to editors:

- The Illuminated River International Design Competition is a two-stage competition being run in accordance with EU procurement guidelines and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The competition has been advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU). It is being run by specialist competition organisers, Malcolm Reading Consultants. The deadline is 14:00 BST July 7, 2016.
- The competition is funded through a grant of £250,000 from the Rothschild Foundation and £250,000 from the Mayor of London. The City of London has also pledged £500,000 towards the realisation of later stages of the project.
- The City of London Corporation's Bridge House Estate is providing £500,000 towards improvements on London Bridge, which will help realise the project. The City of London Corporation supports and promotes the City as a world leader in international finance and business services and provides local services and policing for those working in, living in, and visiting the Square Mile. It also provides valued services to London and the nation. These include the Barbican Centre, Barbican Music Library, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, Guildhall Library, Guildhall Art Gallery and Roman Amphitheatre, five Thames bridges (including Tower Bridge and Millennium Bridge), London Metropolitan Archives, a range of

education provision (including three City Academies); Central Criminal Court at Old Bailey, over 10,000 acres of open spaces (including Hampstead Heath and Epping Forest), and three wholesale food markets. The City of London Corporation is London's Port Health Authority and also runs the Animal Reception Centre at Heathrow. For more details, visit www.cityoflondon.gov.uk

- The Illuminated River Foundation

The Illuminated River Foundation, chaired by Hannah Rothschild, was established in 2016 (application registered with the Charity Commission) to procure and oversee the Illuminated River project. The charity's core project is the creation of public art through light on London's bridges. The Foundation's mission is to celebrate London's famous river: enhancing some of the capital's less well-used public spaces and improving and enlivening the atmosphere of the river on winter afternoons and after dark.

The funds for this circa £20m project will be raised, largely from private sources, by the Illuminated River Foundation, backed by the Rothschild Foundation and working in collaboration with other stakeholders. Following the competition and the detailed design stage, the funds will be granted, along with the design, to the relevant organisations which manage or own the bridges.

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