

VOTE ALICE ASAFU ADJAYE | RIBA+25



Dear Colleague,

With the current RIBA election underway, did you know there is a position for an Africa and Middle East council member – i.e. representing RIBA members like you?

I, Alice Asafu Adjaye, would like to represent you on the RIBA Council. Please take a minute to consider my candidacy.

I was born and raised in Ghana. Like many of you, I trained and worked in the UK (nearly 30 years in my case working with Adjaye Associates and Foster & Partners).

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I am currently immersed in the exciting and challenging work of building a “networked” architecture and design practice, Mustard, in Accra, Ghana.

For these elections I am running on two inter-twined platforms:

I am running first to upgrade our professional experience in the Region.

Like you, I see the tremendous opportunities that Africa and the Middle East has to offer architects – the chance to contribute to the development of cities, the responsibility to influence urban planning and sustainable design in emerging economies, ensuring the mistakes made in the developed world are not repeated.

Like you, also, I experience the challenges of working in our Region - we work with a myriad of environments (social and physical) and with many different popular, official and business cultures. And we face shifting and often frustrating expectations.

Much of this could be addressed with the support of a strong professional body such as RIBA.

With RIBA fully behind us, we could socialise potential clients and the public about the value of design by trained professionals in order to raise expectations of the industry.

We could attract the brightest and best of our youth to see the profession as a preferential career option, and work with schools and colleges to shape their training to the standards we require.

We could network more tightly within our membership, and between us and national and regional associations increase the influence of architects on the architectural landscape of the Region as a whole. All of this would increase our individual professional satisfaction, security and recognition.

I am willing to devote considerable time to making all of this happen.

I am also quite frankly running on a diversity ticket. None of what I have described above will happen until RIBA actually opens itself up to more diverse racial, gender, and cultural experiences, perspectives and direction. It is only then that it can commit to resource the interventions that we require.

I am a black African woman – 3 demographics massively under-represented in the profession and on the council - a situation that must be changed.

The RIBA Strategic Plan 2016-2020 states that ‘Equality and Inclusivity, Social Purpose, Professionalism and Ethics, will be themes that run through everything the institute does’. We need more than slogans.

RIBA+25, an initiative spearheaded by Elsie Owusu (Founder of SOBA and RIBA Council Member) that has the backing of the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust, and Baroness Doreen Lawrence, is working to increase the BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) RIBA Council membership in this year's election to achieve Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, with a target of 25% BAME membership by 2018.

As one of the 14 candidates of the RIBA+25 initiative, I have support and endorsement from leading lights such as Sir Richard Rogers, Ben Derbyshire (RIBA president elect), Elsie Owusu, Owen Luder and Sir David Adjaye.

architectsjournal.co.uk/news/rogers-adjaye-and-brooks-among-top-architects-backing-riba-diversity-drive/10021192.article?blocktitle=News-features&contentID=13634
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I ask for your vote in my quest to help address and correct the negatives and to encourage and reinforce the positives.

I will work hard in ensuring that the members in Africa and the Middle East truly benefit from the much-valued global RIBA brand, working within the council to realise the desire to take advantage of the significant international opportunities RIBA has identified as existing for all members, in the many countries we practice.

I hope I can count on your vote!

Vote for Alice Asafu-Adjaye. Vote for Change.

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