

Landscape Architecture FAQs

Landscape architecture is a profession committed to creating healthy, enjoyable, and secure places for the future. Landscape architecture combines art and science. It is the profession that designs, plans, and manages our land.

Landscape architecture has strong roots in the United States and early examples, such as Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, are still much admired. The actual term landscape architecture became common after 1863 when Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux designed New York's Central Park.

WHAT DOES A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT DO ON THE JOB?

Landscape architects deal with the increasingly complex relationships between the built and natural environments. Landscape architects plan and design traditional places such as parks, residential developments, campuses, gardens, cemeteries, commercial centers, resorts, transportation facilities, corporate and institutional centers, and waterfront developments. They also design and plan the restoration of natural places disturbed by humans such as wetlands, stream corridors, mined areas, and forested land. Their appreciation for historic landscapes and cultural resources enables landscape architects to undertake preservation planning projects for national, regional, and local historic sites and areas.

WHAT SKILLS DOES A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT NEED?

- Sensitivity to landscape quality
- Understanding of the arts and a humanistic approach to design
- Ability to analyze problems in terms of design and physical form
- Technical competence to translate a design into a built work
- Skills in all aspects of professional practice including management and professional ethics

WHAT ARE THE EDUCATION AND LICENSING REQUIREMENTS?

A formal education is essential to gain the skills and knowledge to become a landscape architect. Professional education in landscape architecture can be obtained at the undergraduate or graduate level. There are two undergraduate professional degrees. These usually require four or five years of study in design, construction techniques, art, history, natural, and social sciences. There are generally three types of graduate degree programs. For more information visit the ASLA website. www.asla.org/nonmembers/recruitment/edcareer.htm

At present, 49 states license (or register) landscape architects. Each state sets its own requirements for registration, but all require candidates to pass a national examination (the Landscape Architect Registration Examination, or LARE).

WHERE DO LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS FIND JOBS AFTER GRADUATION?

Landscape architects are employed in private, public, and academic organizations. Private sector opportunities are found within landscape architectural, engineering, architectural, and planning firms. Landscape architects may also work with other types of private corporations that have physical planning departments, or offer products and services related to land planning and development. Public sector employment opportunities are found within federal, state, regional, and municipal agencies involved in land planning, development, and preservation. Landscape architects in academic practice teach and conduct research in the professional programs offered by colleges and universities across the country.

WHAT IS A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT'S SALARY?

Landscape architectural salaries vary depending on the years of experience, geographical location, and type of position. In 2007, the average salary for entry-level landscape architects was \$41,500, while in 2006 that of experienced practitioners was \$89,700.

For more information about a career in landscape architecture, visit the ASLA's website. www.asla.org/nonmembers/recruitment/recruitment.html