



**CITY OF HELSINKI RECEIVES THE CONCEPT AND DEVELOPMENT STUDY  
FOR A POTENTIAL GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM IN HELSINKI**

**Report Proposes Location, Purpose, Financing and Governance of a Museum and Recommends  
Moving Forward with an Architectural Competition**

A new Guggenheim Museum in Helsinki would make a distinct contribution to Finland's cultural landscape, according to the concept and development study that representatives of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation delivered officially on Tuesday morning, January 10, to Mayor Jussi Pajunen. The study was commissioned by the City of Helsinki a year ago to explore the possibility of creating a new Guggenheim Museum in Helsinki.

No decisions have been made regarding the proposal that is set forth in the study. The City Board and the City Council of Helsinki will review the recommendations of the study over the next weeks, in a public process that will extend at least into February 2012. The City of Helsinki will then decide whether to move to the next phase of the project. At that time, the Board of the Guggenheim Foundation, in consultation with representatives of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, will also formally decide whether to endorse moving ahead.

The report by the Guggenheim study team proposes that a museum would be built on a City-owned site along the South Harbor waterfront, where the Kanava Terminal Building currently stands. The total area of the museum would be approximately 12,000 square meters (129,000 square feet), with 3,920 square meters (42,000 square feet) devoted to exhibition galleries.

The estimated construction costs of the building and its design would be approximately €140 million. The mid-range estimated attendance for a museum is 500,000 – 550,000 visits per year, of which approximately 300,000 visits would be by Finnish residents. Helsinki anticipates funding the project through a combination of public, private, and corporate sources.

The study finds that international exhibitions and programs of a new museum likely would not overlap with those of existing Helsinki institutions. Moreover, a new museum would give the city a signature space that symbolizes Helsinki's aspirations to be a cultural capital. According to the study, a museum would powerfully contribute to the Finnish arts community by acting as an artistic center that convenes and collaborates with Helsinki's other institutions and that draws greater global attention to Helsinki's cultural contributions.

The new institution would help contextualize Finnish art, design, and architecture within the broader tradition of modern art while presenting Finnish audiences with artworks from around the world. A Guggenheim Helsinki would have a stronger focus on architecture and design than other Guggenheim affiliates. As the newest affiliate, Helsinki would also be able to play a unique role in testing new approaches and technologies that could eventually benefit other members of the global network (and museums around the world) through Finland's uniquely advanced technological networks and educated population.

Although the Guggenheim's mission statement includes all "manifestations of visual culture" within its institutional mandate, architecture, and specifically design, have infrequently been featured in the Guggenheim's programs and exhibitions. Precisely because of its historic connections to advanced painting and sculpture, the Guggenheim would offer new audiences in Helsinki access to the broad, transnational practices that characterize contemporary art. Just as Helsinki would in turn open doors to subjects and practices, and artists not well known to the Guggenheim, the Guggenheim would open doors for Helsinki to access the global art community.

Moreover, a museum would be likely to increase cultural tourism and so would have the potential to increase overall attendance at other Helsinki arts institutions.

The study recommends that a Guggenheim Helsinki be largely a non-collecting institution. It would incorporate some conventional elements of an art museum while pushing the boundaries of process, presentation, and audience engagement. The museum potentially would present two to three major and three to five smaller exhibitions each year, supplemented by short-term non-traditional programs and an innovative education program.

The study also recommends that a new museum absorb some of the functions currently performed by the Helsinki Art Museum. The collections and public art functions of the Helsinki Art Museum would be continued and further developed under the auspices of a division of the City of Helsinki dedicated to this purpose. The exhibitions and education functions now performed by the Helsinki Art Museum would be developed as part of the mission and operations of the proposed Guggenheim Helsinki.

If all parties accept the study's recommendations and resolve to move ahead, an international competition would be organized to select an architect for the new Museum.

"Helsinki now has an incredible possibility that we should embrace," stated Jussi Pajunen, the Mayor of Helsinki. "As the study shows, a Guggenheim Museum would be a distinct place in Finland's cultural landscape."

"A Guggenheim Museum in Helsinki would benefit the whole Finnish museums and arts field. It would strengthen Helsinki's position as a Nordic cultural capital and bring more cultural tourists to Helsinki from Finland, Scandinavia, Russia, the Baltic States and other parts of the world. The study's calculations clearly state that investment in the proposed Guggenheim would also be worthwhile economically. The long-term effects will benefit both the City of Helsinki and Finland as a whole."

"I would like to give particular thanks to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, members of the study team, and all the others who have participated in discussions and think tanks and contributed with their expertise and ideas for the study," Pajunen said.

"A Guggenheim Museum in Helsinki, realized according to the recommendations presented in the study, would complement and build upon the spirit of innovation, experimentation, entrepreneurship and social consciousness that has helped Finland become and thrive as an advanced democratic society. This new museum's role as a space of learning, education, artistic production and social exchange is fundamental to its mission. As an affiliate of an international network, a Guggenheim Museum would open a unique opportunity to both absorb new cultural impulses, and to develop and share with others globally recognized achievements and best practices of the Finnish school system, other civic organizations and the Finnish public and private sectors in general," said Tuula Haatainen, Helsinki's Deputy Mayor (Education, Culture and Personnel Affairs

"The recommendations outlined in the study indicate that the City would allocate even greater resources to promote Finnish arts than it now does. I think it is a great idea that the Helsinki Art Museum's exhibitions management would move to and be developed as part of a Guggenheim Museum in Helsinki. However, the Helsinki Art Museum's collections management, new acquisitions, and their display would continue under the City and be developed further. By giving artists, designers and architects access to major international networks, and by promoting new types of conversations of the arts, a Guggenheim Museum in Helsinki would offer global exposure and unprecedented opportunities to practitioners in the field of visual culture in Finland as well as in the Baltic and Nordic regions in general," Haatainen said.

"With gratitude to the Finnish people and their public officials for their interest in the Guggenheim and its global network, we are very pleased to deliver our concept and development study to the City of Helsinki today," stated Richard Armstrong, Director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Foundation. "We undertook this work in the conviction that the information and insight it would produce could be of great value for both Helsinki and the Guggenheim. We are confident that this report will justify the high expectations of our commission."

"Our year of conducting on-site research, developing ideas, and holding in-depth conversations with a multitude of partners was highlighted by the many rewarding dialogues with Finnish artists, members of the public, and cultural leaders," stated Ari Wiseman, Deputy Director, Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation. "One of the rewards of this study will be a closer ongoing relationship between the staff of the Guggenheim and the cultural community of Helsinki."

"We know Helsinki's elected officials and citizens will thoroughly and thoughtfully review the study over the coming weeks, as they move toward a decision on whether to proceed to the next stage," stated Juan Ignacio Vidarte, Deputy Director and Chief Officer for Global Strategies, Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation. "Our confidence in the breadth and transparency of the public process in Finland was in fact one of the major factors that motivated the study's recommendations. We look forward to the discussion."

The City of Helsinki hosted a Study Presentation Seminar at Finlandia Hall to review the results of the study before an invited audience of members of the Helsinki City Council and other elected officials, representatives of the state administration, key figures in the museum and cultural field in Finland and members of the media. Presentations were made by Ari Wiseman, Deputy Director, Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, and Juan Ignacio Vidarte, Deputy Director and Chief Officer for Global Strategies, Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation; Mayor Jussi Pajunen, Deputy Mayor Tuula Haatainen; and Janne Gallen-Kallela-Sirén, Director of the Helsinki Art Museum. The Study Presentation Seminar was chaired by Pekka Timonen, Executive Director of World Design Capital Helsinki.

**The study in its entirety and more information on this project and images is accessible at**  
<http://www.hel.fi/guggenheim-study>.

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