



# Presentation: Be a Landscape Architect!

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## Summary

This Career Discovery activity introduces a student to the career of landscape architecture and the wide array of skills it involves and services it provides.

This experience can help a student discover the link between what they do now in school and what they can become in the future.

## Publicize and Document Your Activity

By taking the time to create and implement a WLAM Career Discovery activity, you achieve two great results—you promote the profession while teaching students about sustainability, ecological issues, and the technical aspects of landscape architecture.

Be sure to publicize your activity within your community and document it to share your experience with other ASLA chapters. Refer to the appendix for suggestions on publicizing and documenting your activity.

## Grade Level: 8–12

## Duration

The suggested timeframe is 50 minutes, the average length of a class period.

## Personnel

- Teacher or other adult
- Landscape architect

## Costs

Costs associated with this activity are minimal. Other than the time investment, the only costs involved would be for the photocopying of materials for students.

## Learning Objectives

- Students will learn about landscape architecture as a career.
- Students will understand that landscape architecture is a multidisciplinary field that encompasses many subject areas including geography, math, and science.
- Students will learn how subjects they are studying in school relate to a career in landscape architecture.



## Materials

### PROFESSIONAL MATERIALS

- Images of landscape architecture projects
- Materials associated with the project you plan to present to students
- Project materials your firm has produced; example models your firm has built/created
- Copies of the ASLA career discovery brochure, *Your Path to Landscape Architecture* (obtained by contacting ASLA public relations and communications coordinator JR Taylor at 202-216-2345 or jtaylor@asla.org).
- ASLA [PowerPoint](#) presentation

### EQUIPMENT

- Computer, projector, and screen for the PowerPoint presentation
- Writing surface (board, flip chart, etc.)
- Markers to use on the writing surface

### SESSION HANDOUTS (SEE APPENDIX)

- *Landscape Architecture FAQs* handout

## Preparation Checklist

At least one month in advance:

- Contact a school, Scout troop, or other organization that might be interested in hosting a presentation about landscape architecture.

One week prior:

- Touch base with the teacher or adult supervisor to reconfirm the date, time, and meeting place.
- Gather images of different types of landscape architecture projects to show the students.
- Decide which one of your projects is most appropriate to share with the students and gather pertinent materials to show them.
- Make copies of materials you plan to distribute during your presentation.



## Procedure

### ADVANCE PREPARATION

- Select images of local landscape architecture projects to show students.
- Be sure there's a surface on which to write (chalk board, white board, or flip chart).
- Set up computer, projector, and screen for showing the PowerPoint presentation.

### WHAT TO DO

#### SET THE STAGE

TIME: 10 MIN

1. Introduce yourself. Write your name where students can refer to it.
2. Tell the students you are a landscape architect and today they will learn about what landscape architects do and what it takes to become one.
  - If it is World Landscape Architecture Month inform students about its significance. The month encompasses Earth Day on April 22 and the birthday of Frederick Law Olmsted on April 26, who founded the American landscape architecture profession.
  - You may wish to connect your presentation to PARK(ing) Day, an annual event in which local community members, students, and designers transform metered parking spaces into temporary parklets. It occurs on the third Friday of September.
3. Ask students what they think landscape architects do.
  - Explain that landscape architecture encompasses the analysis, planning, design, management, and stewardship of natural and built environments.
4. Ask students for examples of the types of projects they think a landscape architect might design.
  - Types of projects include: residential; parks and recreation; monuments; urban design; streetscapes and public spaces; transportation corridors and facilities; gardens and arboreta; security design; hospitality and resorts; institutional; academic campuses; therapeutic gardens; historic preservation and restoration; reclamation; conservation; corporate and commercial; landscape art and earth sculpture; interior landscapes; and more.



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5. Show images of landscape architecture projects.
  - Show images of projects you have worked on and/or projects in your community that the students may be familiar with.
  - Ask students if they've visited any of the local places and what they think about them? How do these places make them feel?

### SHOW THE ASLA CAREER DISCOVERY PRESENTATION

TIME: 10 MIN

6. Introduce the presentation by telling students you are a member of a national professional organization, the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA).
  - The ASLA advances landscape architecture through advocacy, communication, education, and fellowship.
  - It was founded over 100 years ago (1899) and has grown to have more than 15,000 members in all 50 states, as well as some members from other countries.

### REVIEW A PROJECT

TIME: 15 MIN

7. Tell the students you will cover some key points about a project you recently completed.
8. Explain the process used to complete the project—assess/design/build.
  - Show any relevant project-related materials that are available such as concept sketches, and/or DVD and CD packages.
  - Highlight a key issue that you had to address in the project and describe how you went about problem-solving it.
  - Describe any other professionals that you worked with on the project.

### DESCRIBE YOUR JOB

TIME: 10 MIN

9. Provide information about your personal experience as a landscape architect. Some points you might address are:
  - Roles and responsibilities
    - What do you do?
    - Who do you work with?
    - What do you like best about your job?
  - Your experience
    - What do you value and enjoy about your job or career?



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- Has the job or career helped you make a difference in your community?
- Personal attributes
- What kind of personal traits, interests, and styles match this job?

### DISCUSS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE AS A CAREER CHOICE

10 MIN

10. Distribute the *Landscape Architecture FAQs* handout.

- Review the education and licensing that are required to become a landscape architect.
- Point out the ASLA web address and describe the career information the students can find on the site.

### WRAP UP

5 MIN

11. Ask the students for any questions they have about the project you reviewed or about landscape architecture as a career.

- Prepare to answer students' questions. Sometimes students ask salary and other personal questions. Be ready to make a quick decision on what is okay to share and how to say something is not, in your mind, appropriate to share.



# Appendix

Publicize and Document Your Activity ..... 7

## **HANDOUTS**

*Landscape Architecture FAQs*



## Publicize and Document Your Activity

Don't let the effort you put into creating and implementing a Career Discovery activity go unnoticed!

Staff at ASLA National is always on hand to help promote your events to local media; feel free to contact them at anytime. If you would like to reach out to local media yourself, below are some tips to assure your name appears in print or online.

### **PUBLICIZE**

For tips on reaching out to local media, refer to the PR Handbook, available as part of ASLA's Chapter Operations Workbook. It is online at:

<https://www.asla.org/ChapterOutreach.aspx>

You'll find tips like these:

- Pitching the story to the media
- Formatting the press release
- Appealing to the audience
- Making the story relevant
- Social media tips

### **TAKE PICTURES & VIDEO**

Be sure to take lots and lots of pictures and video! ASLA National would love to share your activity online as inspiration for the other chapters.

Send us photos or video of your event featuring:

- Students interacting with professionals (we must have a signed photo release from parents to use the photos)
- Your presentation materials
- The activity in process
- The end result of your activity

### **DOCUMENT**

Email public relations and communications coordinator JR Taylor—at [jtaylor@asla.org](mailto:jtaylor@asla.org)—to report on the activity or activities that your chapter completes.

# 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 ASLA's Career Discovery page: [asla.org/yourpath](http://asla.org/yourpath)

At present, all 50 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. The average annual salary and bonuses for those in the landscape architecture field total \$78,600, according to the 2010-11 ASLA National Salary Survey.

For more information about a career in landscape architecture, visit ASLA's Career Discovery page: [asla.org/yourpath](http://asla.org/yourpath)