

# DBIA's 2025 Student Competition Showcases Progressive Design-Build in Airport Expansion Challenge

*Registration open for university teams to compete in DBIA's premier design-build competition, culminating at the 2025 Design-Build Conference & Expo.*

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MEMS, TCFM, FDBIA*

Institute of America (DBIA) has officially opened registration for the 2025 National Design-Build Student Competition, offering students nationwide the opportunity to showcase their design-build expertise in a fast-paced, real-world challenge. This annual competition, a cornerstone of DBIA's student engagement efforts, prepares future industry leaders by providing hands-on experience with design-build best practices.

Teams of university students will compete in two phases, beginning with a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process judged at the regional level. Regional winners will then advance to Phase Two, where they will respond to a

Request for Proposals (RFP) and the top three judged teams will present their final submissions in front of a national judging panel at DBIA's Design-Build Conference & Expo in Las Vegas, Nevada, on Nov. 6, 2025.

This year's competition expands on last year's challenge, which focused on the initial Phase One procurement of a major airport expansion, including a new main terminal and airside expansion with an automated people mover (APM). That project was delivered using a fixed-fee, variable scope design-build approach. The 2025 competition takes the next step, challenging student teams to complete the terminal by adding additional gates and concessions on each side of the new main terminal building using Progressive Design-Build (PDB).

The competition has been a launchpad for future design-build leaders, with past winners earning national recognition and career-building opportunities. Last year's champions from the University of Arizona impressed judges with their innovative and collaborative approach, earning

national media coverage, including a feature in [Construction Dive](#). Their victory also underscored the growing role of women in the AEC industry, as highlighted in a [Design-Build Delivers Podcast episode](#).

“The competition was fierce. Every team had a strong showing and some truly innovative approaches that made the decision incredibly tough,” said DBIA’s Student/Academia Engagement Liaison William G. “Bill” Hasbrook, Jr., MEMS, TCFM, FDBIA. “However, the University of Arizona team definitely thought outside the box, and with last year’s new project and delivery approach, there was no box to begin with, making their win even more impressive.”



Cardinal Design-Build, a student design-build team from the University of Arizona, learned they won the 2024 DBIA National Student Design-Build Competition at the Design-Build Conference & Expo in Dallas, Texas, Nov. 8. Photo by Robb McCormick Photography

The competition is open to all university teams, regardless of whether their school has a DBIA Student Chapter. Teams must register by Aug. 27, 2025, and faculty advisors must submit a Letter of Intent by Aug. 28, 2025. The competition officially kicks off with the issuance of the RFQ on Sept. 2, 2025.

The National Student Competition provides a platform for emerging design-build talent and serves as a launching pad for students seeking to connect with industry leaders and advance their careers. Winners will be announced during the Design-Build Conference & Expo on Nov. 7, 2025.

For more information on the competition and registration details, visit [DBIA’s Student Competition webpage](#).

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