

Virgin Hyperloop One Announces Collaboration with Washington University in St. Louis

ST. LOUIS, MO – June 24, 2019 – Following CEO Jay Walder’s recent visit to Missouri, Virgin Hyperloop One announced an ongoing collaboration with the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts at Washington University in St. Louis.

Working in conjunction with Virgin Hyperloop One, Associate Professor Linda C. Samuels at the Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts created a Master of Architecture (MArch) studio to map the social, political and physical context of the state and explore elegant hyperloop infrastructure proposals for Missouri. Partners at Black & Veatch, the St. Louis Regional Chamber, and the Missouri Department of Transportation participated in workshops and design reviews throughout the semester.

“We are so excited to be collaborating with students and faculty at this world-renowned university. Partnerships are central to our business model, so it’s great to see academia, the public sector, and the private sector rallying together to bring hyperloop to Missouri,” said Jay Walder, CEO of Virgin Hyperloop One.

This Infrastructural Urbanism class kicked off with a visit to Virgin Hyperloop One’s headquarters in Los Angeles, California and their full-scale test track in Las Vegas, Nevada. The students were able to engage with Virgin Hyperloop One engineers, architects, business analysts, and other subject-matter experts to gain a firm grasp on the technology and understand its potential to transform regions.

“My research centers around infrastructural opportunism, which seeks to leverage large scale infrastructure investment for more equitable and productive social, environmental, and economic gains. New high-speed ground travel like hyperloop will have profound impacts on the inter-connectivity of people and systems. Now is the time for architects, landscape architects and urban designers to play a role in the future of mobility,” said Professor Samuels.

Ten MArch students opted to take this Spring 2019 studio where they created symbiotic, mega-regional infrastructure proposals for hyperloop in Missouri. The [projects](#) spanned all facets of urban design, including utilizing hyperloop to bridge urban/rural divides, equalize the cost of living across mega-regions, and create specialized economic and industrial clusters. Virgin Hyperloop One employees, along with representatives from the Missouri Department of Transportation, the Kansas City Design Center, and First Rule, attended the final review.

“The student projects were thought-provoking and provided invaluable insight for the Coalition and Blue Ribbon Panel to take forward,” said Andrew Smith, Co-Chairman of the Missouri Hyperloop Coalition, Vice Chair of the Missouri Hyperloop Blue Ribbon Panel, and Project Liaison of the Missouri Hyperloop at First Rule.

This momentum in Missouri comes as the state is exploring a hyperloop route that would connect Kansas City and St. Louis in under 30 minutes. In late 2018, an independent report, authored by Overland Park-based Black & Veatch, confirmed the commercial viability of the route along the I-70 corridor. Since the release of that report, House Speaker Elijah Haahr has announced the formation of a Blue Ribbon Panel to explore funding mechanisms and next steps for the project.

Media Assets

Images from the collaboration can be found [here](#). Image credit: Carol Green, Washington University in St. Louis.

About Virgin Hyperloop One

Virgin Hyperloop One is the only company in the world that has successfully tested its technology at scale, launching the first new mode of mass transportation in over 100 years. The company successfully operated a full-scale hyperloop vehicle using electric propulsion and electromagnetic levitation under near-vacuum conditions, realizing a fundamentally new form of transportation that is faster, safer, cheaper, and more sustainable than existing modes. The company is now working with governments, partners, and investors around the world to make hyperloop a reality in years, not decades. Learn more about Virgin Hyperloop One's technology, vision, and ongoing projects [here](#).

About the Graduate School of Architecture & Urban Design at Washington University in St. Louis

The Graduate School of Architecture & Urban Design (GSAUD) in Washington University's Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts offers professional degrees in [architecture](#), [landscape architecture](#), and [urban design](#). The school supports interdisciplinary collaboration necessary to effectively address the complex environmental and social issues facing our urbanizing world. Graduate programs focus on environmental ethics, local and global perspectives, social and spatial equity, and technical fluency, providing students with experiences that allow them to innovate and lead in their fields. With dual degrees offered in architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design and joint degrees with construction management, social work, and business, design becomes the synthetic context for transdisciplinary knowledge through research and practice.