MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA + APPLICATION INFORMATION

The Master of Architecture (M.Arch) program is a NAAB accredited professional degree program in the area of architectural design. There are two professional degree program tracks: +3 M.Arch (typically requiring three years of residency) and the +2 M.Arch – Advanced Standing (typically requiring two years of residency).

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

+3 M.Arch: Individuals who have completed a four-year Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree, or its equivalent, with no prior degree in architecture, are eligible for admission to the three-year professional degree program. A minimum one-semester college-level course in physics or calculus is required. Preparation in the visual arts such as drawing, sculpture, graphics and/or basic design is strongly encouraged. Courses in the humanities, ecology, history of art, and architecture are strongly encouraged, although not required.

+2 M.Arch: Advanced Standing: Students seeking advanced standing must have a four-year architectural studies degree from: a U.S. school with an accredited professional architecture program; a U.S. school that is accredited by a regional accrediting body, without an accredited professional architecture program; or an international program that is deemed equivalent. Students with advanced standing are required to complete a minimum two-year residency, or 4 semesters of study at USC.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

APPLICATION FEE

The USC CAS Graduate Application fee is $90 plus a SlideRoom fee of $20. Fee Waiver eligibility for the USC CAS application is determined by the USC Office of Graduate Admission. The School of Architecture does not provide fee waivers for the SlideRoom application.

YOUR USC ID NUMBER

You will receive your 10-digit USC ID via email within two to three business days after submitting your online application. Please keep this ID on record and make sure to include it in all your communication with USC. You will also need to include it when mailing any documents to the university.

It is important to note that your 10-digit USC ID is different from the USC CAS ID you will receive when you begin your application. The CAS ID is required for only technical support during the application process and is not issued by the university.

NEED HELP? For application help videos, visit the USC Graduate Admission website here.

CREATE YOUR USC GRADUATE ONLINE APPLICATION (USC CAS)

The USC Graduate Application consists of four sections: Personal Information, Academic History, Supporting Information, and Program Materials. Start your USC CAS application here.

Once you have created your account and logged in, add your graduate program/s of interest under the “Add Program” tab.
MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE
APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. **Personal Information**
   Please complete this basic biographical information section.

2. **Academic History**
   **Transcripts**: Upload a copy of your official, university-issued transcript(s) on official letterhead. Unofficial transcripts from university student portals are not acceptable. Click [here](#) for official transcript guidelines which includes details about international transcripts.

   **GRE Scores**: The GRE is not required for Fall 2025 applicants. Scores submitted will not be reviewed.

   **TOEFL/IELTS Scores**: See page 4 of this document for additional information.

3. **Supporting Information**
   There is no need to enter any information in the Experiences, Achievements, Conferences Attended, or Memberships sections unless that information is NOT included in your resume/CV. You can simply click on the “I am not adding…” in each section.

   **Documents**: Please upload your most current resume/curriculum vitae (CV). It should describe your education, extra-curricular collegiate and community activities, honors, awards, publications, internships, research experience, employment, professional organizations, hobbies, travel, and any other relevant information you would like to include.

4. **Program Materials (3 submissions required)**
   **Statement of Intent**: We are interested in understanding who you are, what makes you a good fit for USC, and what you plan to do with your opportunities at USC and afterward. Please discuss your life experiences, academic interests, professional goals, and specific reasons for pursuing graduate studies in architecture at the USC School of Architecture. Highlight your personal design philosophy and elaborate on the faculty, courses, research topics, and opportunities at USC that you are particularly interested in. There are no minimum or maximum length requirements.

   **Three (3) Letters of Recommendation (via SlideRoom)**: Applicants are required to submit three (3) letters of recommendation from academic or professional references. Applicants who have been out of school for several years may request letters from employers or mentors who can objectively evaluate their professional abilities and academic potential.

   **Portfolio Materials**: The School of Architecture uses SlideRoom to collect and review your portfolio materials. Access SlideRoom from the link provided in your USC CAS application and create a SlideRoom account. Do not create a SlideRoom account before starting the USC CAS application. The USC CAS Application cannot be submitted until the SlideRoom portfolio materials are submitted FIRST.
MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE
APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

+3 M.Arch Applicants:
The portfolio submission is an opportunity for you to showcase your creative intelligence, spatial thinking, dedication to craft, visual expression, and technical ability.

Candidates may demonstrate their design potential in architecture through a variety of mediums, such as freehand drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, graphic design, furniture, product design, and more. This portfolio will help us understand your ability to think and design in three dimensions and illustrate your creative and technical skills across different forms of visual and spatial media.

+2 M.Arch Applicants:
The portfolio submission is an opportunity for you to showcase your creative intelligence, spatial thinking, craft, visual expression, technical ability, and disciplinary knowledge.

The portfolio should emphasize previous design work in personal, professional, and academic settings, with the highest priority given to academic work completed during undergraduate studies. It should include drawings, images, diagrams and photographs of models from past architecture design studios, professional projects, or other artistic/creative activities.

Format: The portfolio submission should consist of a minimum of 10 and up to 25 digital files uploaded online. Images (up to 5MB each), Video (up to 250MB each) and Models (Sketchfab). You may also link to media from YouTube and Vimeo. It is recommended to submit large format images formatted on a single page with labels or a description of the intention of the work and the materials, software, and methods used to create the work. Applicants should assume that their portfolio will be viewed on a standard size laptop screen. Work created as part of a group or professional project team should be identified as such, and the applicant’s individual role described.

The context (academic, professional, personal, etc.) and date of completion of each project must be clearly identified along with a short design statement articulating the design intentions of the project. Any work completed as part of a group project must be properly credited, clearly identifying your role. Please do not include deliverables that you did not produce.

Video Supplement: Please produce a video that is 30 to 60 (maximum) seconds in length where you verbally present ONE of the following:

- Your favorite project from your portfolio and why.
- Your favorite architect or building and why.
- Your specific interest in architecture and why.

Try to be as informative and concise as possible when speaking about your choice. Face and speak directly to the camera; and do not read your presentation. Remember to be yourself; we are looking for students who are passionate about design and have a keen curiosity about architecture and design. The video can be as informal or polished as you like. We are not judging the video on its production quality; rather, this is an opportunity to demonstrate your creative intelligence, thoughtfulness, and ability to communicate ideas clearly.
MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE
INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS ONLY

In addition to the above requirements, international applicants must also fulfill the following:

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENT
International applicants must demonstrate adequate English-language proficiency by submitting either TOEFL or IELTS scores by the application deadline. English-proficiency scores must be dated within 2 years (24 months) of the date you submit your graduate application. For example, a prospective student applying to fall 2025 who submits their USC application in January 2025 will need to have taken the test no earlier than January 2023.

The School of Architecture is interested in reviewing scores above the university’s minimum requirements. The following scores are the department’s minimum requirements.

TOEFL: 95 OR ABOVE, WITH 20 OR ABOVE IN EACH SECTION
TOEFL scores must be submitted electronically from ETS to USC to be considered official. Photocopies or paper copies of scores from the testing service are not acceptable. USC Institution code: 4852 (no department code is required). Information may be obtained from TOEFL, Educational Testing Service: https://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/about.

IELTS: 6.5 OR ABOVE, WITH 6 OR ABOVE ON EACH BAND
IELTS scores must be submitted electronically from the testing service to USC to be considered official. Photocopies or paper copies of scores from the testing service are not acceptable. Select “University of Southern California” from the list of available institutions when you register to take the IELTS test. Alternatively, provide this information to your testing center after you have taken the test. Contact information for the USC department to which you are applying is not required. Information may be obtained from IELTS: https://www.ielts.org.

IMPORTANT: To avoid a delay in the review of your application, plan to take your test well in advance of the application deadline.

In addition to the electronic submission of official scores, upload a copy of either your TOEFL or IELTS score report to ACADEMIC HISTORY section of your USC CAS application.

International applicants are exempt from submitting English-proficiency scores under certain circumstances. Review here.

FINANCIAL DOCUMENT(S) AND PASSPORT COPIES
Per U.S. immigration regulations, all international students intending to study on F-1 or J-1 visa status are required to demonstrate proof of their ability to pay for their education and living expenses in the United States. Review details here.

Before an I-20 or DS-2019 can be issued, USC requires a financial statement demonstrating proof of funding. It is not necessary to submit proof of financial support or passport copies at the time of application as admission consideration to the School of Architecture is based on merit rather than financial resources. Documents can be submitted after an admission decision has been reached and you have committed to attend USC. However, submitting materials (USC CAS, Program Documents) early may help prevent potential delays in I-20/DS-2019 processing.