The Cooper Union ALWAYS VISIONARY
The Cooper Union was founded in 1859 based on a visionary belief far ahead of its time: the belief that a world-class education should be accessible to all members of society, without regard to gender, race, religion, wealth, or social status.

Today, The Cooper Union is a top-ranked, all-honors college comprised of three schools specializing in architecture, art, and engineering. Committed to making education fair and accessible, The Cooper Union awards every admitted undergraduate student a half-tuition scholarship valued at $22,275* per year, as well as need-based aid.

Honoring Peter Cooper’s belief that education be accessible to all, our mission is to ensure that no student is deterred from attending The Cooper Union based on their financial circumstances.

Peter Cooper had the vision to see the potential in everyone, and to look for new approaches and solutions that would benefit all of society. That’s what an education at The Cooper Union is all about.

*IThis is the value of the scholarship as of the September, 2021 print date.*

“I have endeavored to remember that the object of life is to do good.”

Peter Cooper
Architecture education at The Cooper Union is grounded in the belief that exercising individual creativity is a profoundly social act. Students from all years of study work side-by-side within an open studio, exploring the essential skills of drawing, model-making, and design development, along with analytical and critical uses of digital technologies.

John Hejduk – Jan Palach Memorial

Architect and influential educator John Hejduk AR’50 became dean of the School of Architecture in 1975. He developed its renowned pedagogy over the course of 25 years.

Hejduk's design for the Jan Palach Memorial was exhibited outside the Foundation Building in 2017 and is permanently installed in Prague, Czech Republic, as a symbol of personal sacrifice in the struggle for freedom.

The five-year, studio-based curriculum asks students to engage in research, and debate the role of architecture as a cultural practice with deep societal and environmental implications. Open discussion and rigorous critique are central teaching components and help prepare students for their civic duty in the world.
Faculty and students in the School of Art can regularly be found in critiques, discussing and exchanging ideas that connect their practices to debates in art, history, and politics. Students do not choose a major but instead begin their studies taking a year of foundational courses. Upon completion, they are offered courses in multiple disciplines, such as drawing, painting, printmaking, photography, film/video, graphic design, performance, and sound.

This broad, inclusive approach to learning exposes students to different perspectives on art and the artist in the public sphere. Through critique, experimentation across a variety of disciplines, and a strong intellectual grounding in history, theory, and criticism, students graduate from Cooper as well-rounded creative practitioners working to transform society.

Herb Lubalin
The Herb Lubalin Study Center of Design and Typography at the School of Art was founded in 1985 by The Cooper Union and friends of the late alumnus Herb Lubalin A’39. It houses a vast collection of his work dating from 1939 to 1981.

Push Pin Studios
In 1954, Seymour Chwast A’51, Milton Glaser A’51, Reynold Ruffins A’51, and Edward Sorel A’51 founded the iconic Push Pin Studios. One of the results of their collaboration was a bimonthly publication called the Push Pin Graphic. Chwast’s rooster illustration (above) was featured on one of the publication’s covers.
Open the avenues of scientific knowledge to the youth of our country, so unfolding the volume of nature, that the young may see the beauties of creation.

Peter Cooper

At The Cooper Union, an engineering education starts with the faculty’s extraordinary commitment to teaching. Through mentorship from experts in the fields of chemical, civil, electrical, and mechanical engineering, students develop a strong foundation in the fundamentals of their discipline and apply that knowledge for the benefit of society.

Small classes and project-based, experiential learning provide opportunities for students to enhance their education through research and collaboration with peers and faculty. Together, they pursue innovative and socially responsible solutions to today’s challenges, such as climate change, automation, alternative energy, artificial intelligence, and drug delivery. The School of Engineering produces lifelong learners and active citizens who endeavor to work across disciplines and take action, at Cooper and beyond.

The I-Beam

Peter Cooper invented an early version of the wrought iron I-beam. This beam created a new standard for construction, making it possible to build high-rises and skyscrapers that have since transformed skylines around the world.
Cooper does more than prepare students for a rewarding career. It transforms them into lifelong learners, capable of asking questions, acting, leading, and challenging assumptions.

A foundation in the liberal arts provides the ethical, social, and humanistic framework essential to a flourishing intellect. All students across Cooper’s three schools take a core curriculum of humanities and social sciences courses in which they learn to think, write, and critically investigate their work and its impact on society.

“Heroism involves keeping your love and compassion intact while you try to change the world.”

Patty Jenkins A’93
“I get inspired by one thing about New York, which is that it suggests everything is possible.”

Milton Glaser A’51

The City That Never Sleeps

Herb Lubalin, A’39, designed this logo for the City of New York, home to the iconic Empire State Building, sprawling Central Park, neon-lit Times Square, and a subway system that never closes.

You can study anywhere, but New York City is where you go to be an architect, an artist, an engineer. Our home is the vibrant and diverse East Village, the epicenter of experimental art movements, influential music scenes, and important social activism.

With access to world-class museums, galleries, architecture, cultural experiences, and “Silicon Alley” tech companies and startups, Cooper helps students navigate the city as part of their education, providing opportunities to build networks, get involved in the community, and form professional relationships.
Applying & Affording Cooper

Undergraduate Degrees

Bachelor of Architecture
Bachelor of Fine Arts

Bachelor of Engineering:
Majors: chemical, civil, electrical, mechanical
(Students must declare an intended major in their application)

Bachelor of Science in Engineering
The Cooper Union also offers undergraduate minors in Humanities and Social Sciences, Bioengineering, Computer Science, and Mathematics to students in the School of Engineering and School of Architecture.

Graduate Degrees

Master of Engineering
Master of Science in Architecture

By the Numbers

For the academic year 2020-2021

806 undergraduate students:
17% in architecture; 28% in art;
55% in engineering

81 graduate students in the Maurice Kanbar Graduate Institute working toward the Master of Engineering degree and Master of Science in Architecture

56% male, 44% female

18% acceptance rate for the entering class of Fall 2020. This rate varies per program

Of our undergraduate students, 28% are Asian; 16% are Black or Hispanic; 32% are Caucasian, non-Latino; 3% are Multi-Ethnic or Other; and 7% do not identify with a specific race or ethnicity.

85% of students returned for their sophomore year

80% of first-year students live on campus

Applying & Affording Cooper

Students will automatically be considered for additional merit-based scholarships.

To be considered for need-based financial aid, students must submit the FAFSA (code: 002710).

The Cooper Union non-discrimination policy

Affording Cooper

Applications for first-year undergraduate applicants. Additional materials are required, please visit our website for details. All graduate and transfer applicants apply through the Cooper website.

Student Life

Our Residence Hall offers apartment-style housing to about 170 Cooper students during a typical year, with preference given to first-year students. Through educational and recreational programming in the dormitory, students build a lasting community.

There are more than 60 student-run clubs and organizations with the open invitation to create more.

The Cooper Union Library provides research and academic support through its own collection, as well as various consortia agreements within NYC.

The Center for Career Development offers resources and organizes events to help students transition from the academic world to the professional world. Mock interviews with alumni volunteers, career fairs on campus, and career counseling are just a few ways the Career Center supports professional development.

Application Deadlines

The Cooper Union seeks individuals who can engage with and enrich its community.

UNDERGRADUATE

Early Decision
Albert Nerken School of Engineering: November 1
Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture and School of Art: December 1

Regular Decision: January 5

GRADUATE

Master of Science in Architecture: January 5
Master of Engineering: February 15

Base for a year of living and studying at Cooper, including tuition, fees, and room and board.

14% of undergraduate students are international
53% from New York State
(41% from New York City)
8-to-1 student-to-faculty ratio
85% of students return for their sophomore year
80% of first-year students live on campus

Design: Cooper alumnus / Augustus Saint-Gaudens Award recipient, Emily Oberman A’85, and her team at Pentagram
A world-class education should be accessible to all members of society, without regard to gender, race, religion, wealth, or social status.

Cooper Admissions