Performance-Based Façade Design (PBFD) 2026

Durability, Performance, and the Delivery of Truly Sustainable Design

by Angela Mejorin

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Co-Chair, PBFD 2026 Workshop on *Façade Serviceability: Failures and Lessons Learned*

(with Daniel J. Lemieux, Chair, ASTM Committee E06, Performance of Buildings)

In building envelopes, performance is only as credible as our ability to define it, test it, communicate it, and—when necessary—learn from when it falls short. That is the spirit behind Performance-Based Façade Design (PBFD), an international initiative I founded and curate to bring together façade engineers, architects, manufacturers, testing laboratories, researchers, building owners, and standardization leaders in a focused, discussion-driven setting.

PBFD's fourth edition will take place in **Venice, Italy, September 16–18, 2026**, and it is built around a theme that is both deeply technical and increasingly urgent: ***Durable Façades***. As climate realities intensify and global construction becomes more complex—technically, contractually, and operationally—the industry is being asked to deliver façades that not only meet requirements today, but remain reliable, maintainable, and safe over decades.

Under an **Editorial Partnership collaboration with ASTM International**, PBFD 2026 connects the durability agenda to the practical, measurable domain of serviceability through a dedicated **workshop on *Façade Serviceability: Failures and Lessons Learned,*** and a publication pathway via an **ASTM Selected Technical Papers (STP)** volume that is planned to be presented at PBFD 2027 (September 22–24, 2027).

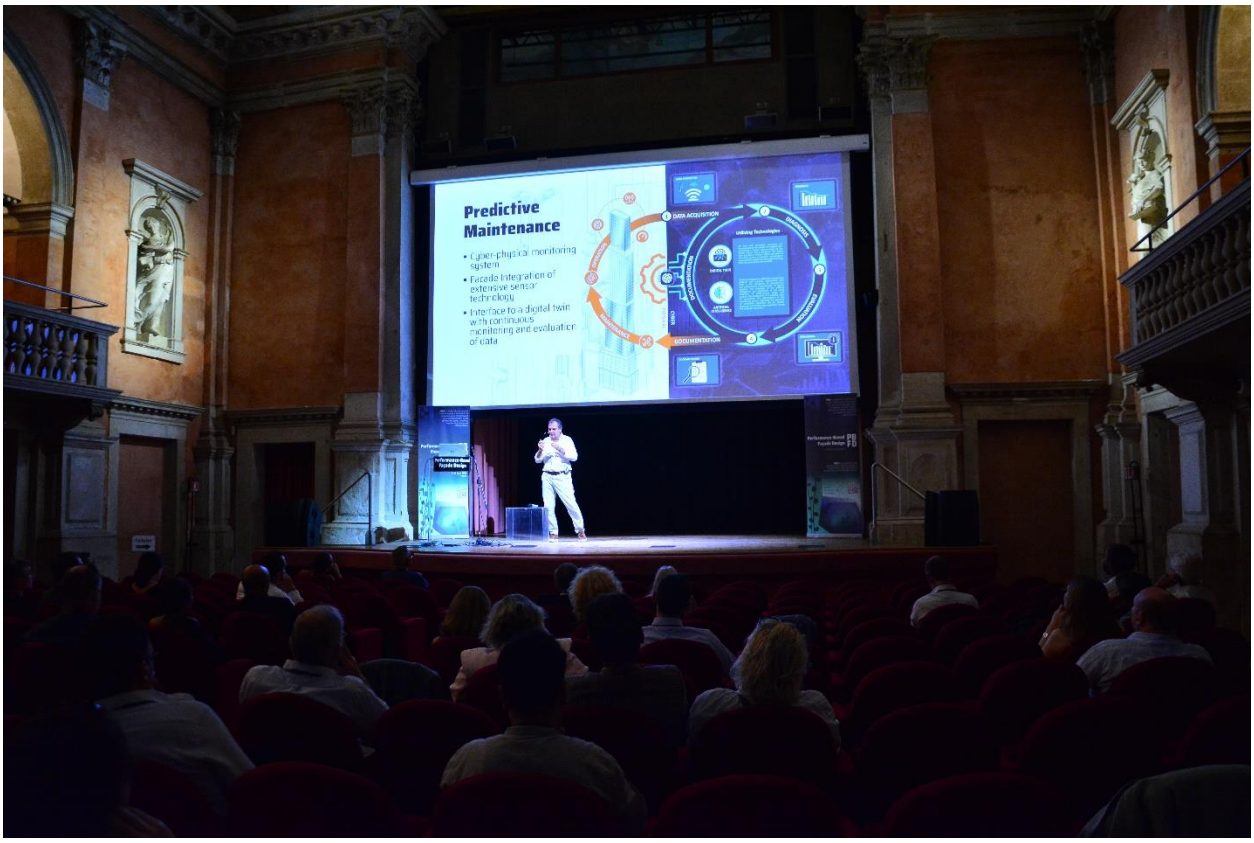
Architect Michele Pasca di Magliano, Director at Zaha Hadid Architects, delivering the opening keynote presentation at PBFD 2025

Why *Durable Façades*—and why now?

Owners and institutions increasingly expect predictable maintenance and lifecycle value, while design and construction teams face accelerating material innovation, changing supply chains, rapid adoption of digital workflows, and greater pressure to reduce embodied and operational carbon.

All of these forces converge at the façade—where design intent meets weather, use, aging, tolerances, interfaces, and the realities of installation. Durability, in this sense, is not only a material property. It is a system outcome shaped by:

- design assumptions and load paths;
- detailing and interfaces (including façade–structure relationships);
- fabrication and installation quality;
- exposure conditions, microclimates, and operational demands;
- maintainability, access strategies, and repair pathways;
- monitoring and feedback loops.



Lars Anders, CEO at Priedemann Façade Experts, delivering a presentation about predictive maintenance strategies for the building envelope at PBFD 2025.

PBFD 2026's Seminar on *Durable Façades* opens the program with a focused investigation into how **technical innovation, material science, and climate realities converge to shape façade strategies that are future-proof, maintainable, and performance-driven**.

Seminar topics include (but are not limited to):

- life-cycle design and façade durability assessment;
- material weathering, corrosion, and ageing mechanisms;
- testing protocols and long-term performance monitoring;
- design for adaptability, circularity, and disassembly;
- the role of digital tools (BIM, LCA, parametric modelling) in predicting durability;
- maintenance strategies and cost-performance optimization;
- policy frameworks and standards promoting durable design; and
- case studies of refurbishment and adaptive reuse.

The seminar is designed for developers, architects, engineers, consultants, researchers, and manufacturers interested in advancing the dialogue on durable façade design.

Three keynote voices framing PBFD 2026

PBFD 2026 will feature keynote contributions that connect durability to design leadership, real-world delivery constraints, and long-term operational accountability.

Silvia Prandelli, Senior Principal at **Populous**, will deliver the opening keynote at PBFD 2026, bringing the perspective of global design leadership and large-scale project delivery where performance, longevity, and user experience intersect.

PBFD 2026 announced keynote speakers. From left to right: Silvia Prandelli, Astrid Piber, and Andrei Koshelev.

Astrid Piber, Partner at **UNStudio**, will also keynote within the *Durable Façades* Seminar, contributing an integrated viewpoint on façade strategy, architectural ambition, and the practical realities of delivering maintainable, resilient envelopes at the highest level of design execution.

Bridging the seminar into the workshop, PBFD 2026 will feature a keynote by **Andrei Koshelev**, AIA SIA, titled ***Durable Façade: A Client Perspective.*** At the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (**ETH Zurich**), Andrei is responsible for supporting the delivery and long-term stewardship of an extensive building portfolio comprising hundreds of thousands of square meters of façade systems, where maintenance planning, repairability, and operational continuity are primary performance criteria. His perspective is further informed by prior experience at **Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)** in the United States, where he contributed to the design and delivery of large-scale, technically complex projects. Drawing on this combined background in global practice and institutional client representation, his keynote emphasizes a core performance-based principle: **façade durability must be evaluated in terms of economics, serviceability, and reliable long-term performance**, and these considerations should guide decision-making from early design through operation. In this context, the keynote directly informs the workshop's focus on serviceability by reinforcing the need for measurable, field-verified performance criteria—a foundational objective of ASTM Committee E06 and of the associated STP development.

From durability intent to serviceability reality: the PBFD 2026 Workshop

If the seminar frames durability as an objective, the PBFD 2026 Workshop on ***Façade Serviceability: Failures and Lessons Learned*** addresses the technical and operational space where durability is validated—or challenged—through real-world performance.

Co-chaired by myself and **Daniel J. Lemieux** (Chair, ASTM Committee **E06 on Performance of Buildings**), the workshop is a case-driven forum focused on field evidence, diagnostic methods, and lessons learned. Serviceability is often the façade's "everyday truth"—not ultimate capacity, but the conditions that impact occupants, operations, maintenance costs, and reputation: air and water management, movement and deflection behavior, sealant and gasket performance, condensation risk, acoustic performance, tolerance management, and interface stability under wind and thermal cycles.

Suggested workshop topics include:

- field investigations of façade serviceability issues (air/water infiltration, deflection, sealant deterioration, noise, condensation, etc.);
- lessons learned from testing, monitoring, and commissioning of envelope systems;

- serviceability under wind-induced and thermal loads;
- interfaces between façade and structure: tolerances, movement, anchoring;
- rehabilitation and maintenance strategies for existing façades;
- insurance, liability, and performance-based specifications.

The workshop encourages an open, multidisciplinary dialogue—combining design, engineering, construction, and operational perspectives—with the aim of **turning experience into transferable knowledge that improves outcomes across the industry.**

PBFD–ASTM Editorial Partnership

An essential component of the **PBFD–ASTM Editorial Partnership is to couple event dialogue with a durable technical record**. Under this collaboration, the workshop is aligned with an **ASTM Selected Technical Papers (STP)** volume titled *Façade Serviceability: Failures and Lessons Learned* (Editors: Angela Mejorin and Daniel J. Lemieux).

The STP is planned to be published by ASTM and presented at PBFD 2027, subject to the established production workflow and publication readiness. The goal is to ensure that serviceability knowledge—often held as internal experience across firms, insurers, labs, and forensic teams—can become a curated, peer-reviewed reference that supports better design decisions, clearer specifications, improved commissioning strategies, and stronger performance accountability.

Angela Mejorin and Daniel J. Lemieux will be co-editors of the ASTM Selected Technical Papers (STP) volume that will follow the PBFD workshop on Façade Serviceability: Failures and Lessons Learned.

The PBFD Advisory Group: multidisciplinary leadership

PBFD is guided by an international **PBFD Advisory Group**, a multidisciplinary body of recognized experts who help shape the thematic direction of each edition and support content evaluation. Their combined expertise ensures PBFD remains aligned with innovation, performance-based thinking, and the evolving challenges in façade technology, sustainability, real estate, and standardization.

The PBFD Advisory Group includes:

- **Agnes Koltay** — Founder, **Koltay Façades**
- **Akira Kudo** — Standard Manager, **ISO**/TC162 Doors, Windows and Curtain Walling; Japan Sash Manufacturers Association
- **Daniel J. Lemieux** — Director and Principal, **Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.** and Wiss, Janney, Elstner Limited, UK (WJE); Chair, ASTM Committee E06 on Performance of Buildings
- **Frank Maas** — Director of Concepts & Acquisitions, **the EDGE**
- **Lorenzo Pandolfi** — Founding Director, **Logic Planning**
- **Michele Pasca di Magliano** — Director, **Zaha Hadid Architects**
- **Mikkel K. Kragh** — Associate Director, **Arup**
- **Stefano Rossi** — Lead Façade, **WSP**
- **Vivian Manasc** — Principal, **Reimagine Architects**

Together, the Advisory Group supports PBFD's role as a forward-looking platform at the intersection of design, technology, durability, sustainability, and global performance frameworks.

Call for Abstracts: PBFD 2026 Seminar, Workshop, and off-site activities

PBFD 2026 is welcoming submissions for:

1. **Seminar presentations** aligned with *Durable Façades*;
2. **Workshop contributions** aligned with *Façade Serviceability: Failures and Lessons Learned*; and
3. **Off-site activity proposals** aligned with PBFD 2026 themes.

Abstract submission deadline (for all tracks): April 5, 2026.

Selected authors and organizers will be invited to present their work during the event in Venice. **Workshop speakers are also invited to develop full papers for consideration within the ASTM STP publication pathway.**

Eckersley O'Callaghan Technical Directors of the Los Angeles, London, Paris, and Milan offices discussing about façade circularity at PBFD 2025.

PBFD 2026 Sponsorship Opportunities

PBFD 2026 offers a range of sponsorship opportunities for organizations seeking to engage with an **international audience of decision-makers, technical leaders, and innovators active in the building enclosure and façade sector.**

Sponsorship options are structured to support varying levels of involvement, from targeted support of specific program elements—such as seminar sessions, workshops, or curated activities—to broader event-level partnerships. All sponsorships are designed to align with PBFD's emphasis on performance-based design, technical rigor, and knowledge exchange.

Beyond the formal conference program, PBFD 2026 is conceived as a curated professional experience in Venice, Italy, fostering meaningful interaction among participants.

Organizations interested in supporting PBFD 2026 are invited to contact the PBFD Curator, Angela Mejorin, for further information.

Invitation to contribute

PBFD 2026 is designed for professionals who are willing to engage in a high-resolution discussion about what makes façades last—and what causes them to underperform in service. The pairing of the *Durable Façades* seminar and the *Façade Serviceability* workshop is intentional: **durability is a goal, and serviceability is often the reality check that validates whether durability has truly been achieved**.

If your work addresses long-term performance, field investigations, testing and monitoring, commissioning insights, rehabilitation strategies, digital prediction of aging, or rigorously documented case studies with transferable learning, **submit an abstract by April 5, 2026**, and join us in Venice on September 16–18, 2026.

The PBFD *Grand Finale* event is hosted at Palazzo Nani Bernardo, a magnificent 16th-century Renaissance palace situated on the Grand Canal in Venice's Dorsoduro district.