

Attractions

MANAGEMENT

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The form is inspired by the pyramids

The Grand Egyptian Museum

Giza, Egypt

The long-awaited Grand Egyptian Museum is set to open in late 2022. Home to more than 100,000 artefacts representing 3,500 years of ancient Egyptian history, the 500,000sq m facility will be the world's largest archaeological museum.

Highlights will include King Tutankhamun's entire treasure collection, which will be displayed in its own dedicated exhibition space.

The idea for the museum was first mooted in 2002, when the Egyptian government announced a worldwide competition to design a new museum dedicated to Egypt's history. Irish architectural firm Heneghan Peng Architects secured the contract to design the museum, and construction began in 2005, but it was delayed by the 2011 revolution in Egypt and then by the pandemic.

In January 2022, it was announced that the project was 99 per cent complete; the museum is expected to open towards the end of the year.

The design of the museum was informed by the surroundings, according to the architects: "The site for the Grand Egyptian Museum is located at the edge of the first desert plateau between the pyramids and Cairo. It is defined by a 50m level difference, created as the Nile carves its way through the desert to the Mediterranean – a geological process that has shaped Egypt for over 3,000 years.

"The design of the museum utilises the level difference to construct a new 'edge' to the plateau, a surface defined by a veil of translucent stone that transforms from day to night."

PHOTO: EHAIF ZAHNE EL-SHIN



Róisín Heneghan and Shih-Fu Peng

Waleed Abdel-Fattah, North African senior vice president of Hill International, spoke to *Attractions Management* about the project. Hill International is providing project and construction management services in a joint venture with EHAIF Consulting.

"The Grand Egyptian Museum is one of the greatest cultural projects happening in the world today," said Abdel-Fattah. "The designers have created the building on a north-south axis, matching the old temples. We started construction in 2012. Over time, technology developed and evolved. Our vision was to use only state-of-the-art technology, so we had to adjust to incorporate some of the latest technology as we developed the exhibition. This also meant sometimes we had to re-open the ceilings and walls to accommodate some of the technologies."