

AZ AWARDS 2026

PRESENTED BY AZURE

Submission Details

The AZ AWARDS is AZURE's international design competition recognizing the world's best projects, products and ideas. Entries are juried by a multidisciplinary panel of industry experts.

Important Dates

- Submissions open **November 10, 2025**
- Earlybird deadline **January 23, 2026** at 11:59 pm EST
- Deadline for submissions **February 13, 2026** at 11:59 pm EST
- Finalists will be notified **April 17, 2026**
- People's Choice voting takes place from **April 17 to May 8, 2026**
- AZ Awards Gala: **Late June (date TBA)**
- Winners will be revealed and celebrated on at the AZ Awards Gala in Toronto, and will be featured in Azure Magazine's annual AZ Awards issue.

Guidelines

- Entries must be submitted and received via the online entry system by 11:59 pm EST on February 13, 2026.
- All images must be jpg or tif format, at least 300 dpi resolution.

AZ Awards is open to

- Designers and design firms from all disciplines
- Architects and architectural firms
- Landscape architects, Urban designers
- Developers, manufacturers, clients
- Post-secondary students enrolled in design and architecture programs in 2025

Eligibility

The completion date of projects should be within the past three years, i.e. anytime between November 1, 2022 and December 31, 2025.

Judging criteria

Each project is evaluated on its own merits according to the following four criteria:

- 1. Aesthetics** Is the design contemporary, visually and intellectually stimulating? Does it provoke curiosity, have the capacity to uplift spirits or simply delight?
- 2. Function** How well does it serve its intended use? Does it effectively resolve problems?
- 3. Creativity** Does it incorporate a unique approach, use a new medium or materials? Is it technologically innovative, forward-looking?
- 4. Social and Environmental Responsibility** Does it make respectful use of materials and resources? Does it possess a long life span? Does it contain recycled materials and/or can it be recycled? Does it provide a social benefit?

Jury Process

Each year, the AZ Awards receives hundreds of submissions from around the world. We are thrilled to accept inspiring entries in all our categories.

Soon after the competition deadline, our editorial team reviews ALL submissions in a multi-day series of sessions with local A&D experts. These sessions result in a longlist.

This longlist is then presented to our official jury. With every edition, the AZ Awards convenes an international jury made up of the world's most renowned architects, landscape architects and designers. The jury convenes in March, reviews the longlist, selects a shortlist of finalists (Awards of Merit), and designates the Winners.

Azure will publish online the longlist selected by the editorial team and local experts. After the jury deliberates in March, Azure will publish the official jury's shortlist of finalists. These shortlisted finalists will then compete in the People's Choice segment. The AZ Awards Winners and the People's Choice favourites will be announced at our annual gala and in the July/August print edition of Azure as well as on our AZ Awards website.

Categories

Design

Furniture, single piece: Residential, office, contract and outdoor furniture

Furniture systems & collections: Entire systems and collections, with multiple pieces and variations, for residential and/or contract uses (*office systems, kitchen and bath furniture systems, storage systems, office and residential furniture collections*)

Lighting fixtures: Indoor and outdoor fixtures and systems

Lighting schemes: Permanent architectural lighting programs for commercial, institutional or residential projects; and temporary light-art installations

Interior products: Finishes and accessories, including wall and floor coverings (wallpaper, rugs, tiles, etc.), flooring (wood, tiles, broadloom, etc.), window coverings, hardware

Housewares and Tech Products: Tableware, textiles, kitchenware (small appliances i.e. toasters, spice grinders, cooking pots or utensils), bathroom accessories, home electronics and tech devices (speakers, headphones, etc.), home organization and office accessories, pet accessories

Architectural products: Built-in and heavy-duty items, including sanitary fixtures and fittings (sinks, tubs, faucets, etc.), appliances, doors and windows

Architecture

Residential buildings, Houses: New builds, renovations and additions

Residential buildings, Multi-unit: New builds, renovations and additions

Commercial & Institutional buildings over 1,000 square metres

Commercial & Institutional buildings under 1,000 square metres

Experiential installations: Exhibition designs, showrooms, pop-ups, theatre sets, displays and similar projects, whether temporary or permanent

Adaptive re-use: Projects that reimagine existing buildings or sites in innovative and sustainable ways

Landscape Architecture

Landscapes that are regenerative and revitalizing, whether private or public, urban or rural

Urban Design

Built Development Projects: Completed commercial, residential or mixed-use developments consisting of more than one building

Unbuilt Development Projects: Unbuilt commercial, residential or mixed-use developments consisting of more than one building

Urban Interventions & Infrastructure: Completed bridges, transportation structures, etc. Redesigns to incorporate new green and public spaces into the built environment and schemes for ameliorating transit, cycling and pedestrian circulation.

Experiential Graphic Design

Wayfinding, sign programs, information and map design, experiential brand identity

Interiors

Residential Interiors: Houses, apartments, condos, etc.

Retail & Hospitality Interiors: Hotels, restaurants, cafés, boutiques, concept stores, etc.

Healthcare Interiors: Hospitals, clinics, wellness centres, etc.

Workspace Interiors: Corporate and small scale workplaces, office interiors, co-working spaces, artist studios, etc.

Institutional Interiors: Educational facilities, museums, theatres, cultural and recreational centres, etc.

Concepts

Conceptual projects, ideas and prototypes: Conceptual works, design solutions and objects not yet realized or not in production. Proposals for buildings, landscapes, interiors and products that are abstract, hypothetical or speculative intended for a credible client commission — whether planned to be built or not — or a purely experimental idea.

A+ Award

Student work: Any industrial design product, architectural structure, landscape, interior space or unbuilt/unrealized concept developed by a student enrolled in a post-secondary design or architecture program in 2025. The A+ Award bestows a \$5,000 CAD cash prize; if there is more than one student winner, the cash prize is split among all winners.

Social Good Award and Environmental Leadership

Award

In addition to the category in which they are submitted, entries may also be considered for the **SOCIAL GOOD AWARD** and/or the **ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP AWARD**. A winner in each of these categories will be selected.

For the **SOCIAL GOOD AWARD**, projects must advance social equity and have a positive impact on the collective realm. For the **ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP AWARD**, projects must show sensitivity and respect for the use and management of natural resources throughout their lifecycle, especially with respect to materials and energy use. Projects may be entered in one or both categories.

*AZURE will contact any entrant they believe submitted to an incorrect category in order to suggest a more suitable category. AZURE maintains the right to cancel any categories or subcategories if there are not enough entries to proceed with adjudication

Details of our EMERGING Awards on p.3 —————>

***NEW* EMERGING Awards:**

Inaugurated in 2025, the EMERGING Awards provide special recognition to firms in up to four categories:

- Architecture
- Design
- Landscape
- Interiors

The award is for a body of work that reflects the AZ Awards' criteria of aesthetics, function, creativity and social and environmental responsibility.

Eligibility and Requirements for Emerging Awards:

1. The firm needs to have been established within the past 10 years
2. Architecture and landscape firms need to have at least one principal who is licensed
3. Firms need to submit the following works:
 - **Architecture Firms:** 2 projects (of any scale) completed, 2 underway, 2 concepts
 - **Design Firms:** 2 to 3 products in production (small batch run to mass production), 2 products in design or development, 1 concept
 - **Landscape Firms:** At least 1 project completed, 1 underway, 2 concepts
 - **Interiors Firms:** 2 to 3 projects completed, 2 underway, 2 concepts
4. Entry Requirements:
 - Images and description of completed projects and renderings and description of in-progress projects and concepts (no more than 300 words for each description)
 - Rationale for EMERGING recognitions – 500- to 800-word description of the firm's portfolio and how it reflects the AZ Awards' criteria of aesthetics, function, creativity and social and environmental responsibility
 - Support letters from at least two notable members of the A&D profession (these could include practitioners, critics, academics, etc.)

Fees

(Fees for entries submitted within Canada are in CAD; fees for entries submitted outside Canada are in USD)

Early-bird Fees: For entries submitted by Friday January 23, 2025 at 11:59 pm EST

- A* Award for Student Work: \$35 per submission
- All other categories: \$250 for the first submission, \$225 for the second submission, \$200 for each following submission

Regular Fees: Entries submitted after the early-bird deadline

- A* Award for Student Work: \$45 per submission
- All other categories: \$275 for the first submission, \$250 for the second submission, \$225 for each following submission

Each entry includes a 1-year digital subscription to AZURE Magazine, valued at \$25.95 CAD.

Full payment must be received by the submission deadline. Entries submitted without the appropriate submission fee will not be eligible for judging. Payments are only accepted online.

Submission Specs

Images: You may submit up to 30 images and/or drawings/renderings in jpg or tif format, at least 300 dpi. If submitting a rendering, please ensure that this is clearly indicated in the file name. Make sure to credit the photographer. When submitting images from multiple photographers, include the photographer's name in the file name.

Video: Entrants are encouraged to share videos of their work that help to communicate the project. It is preferred if the video is shared via web link (e.g. YouTube, Vimeo), but we will accept direct uploads in .mov, .mp4 or mpg format with a file size less than 1 GB.

NOTE: Images and videos are primarily for the jurors to get a better representation and thorough understanding of your projects. If there are any images or videos that should not be published – should your entry be shortlisted – make sure to add DO NOT PUBLISH in the image/video file name.

Project name: Indicate the name that represents your project/product and that should be used when referring to your project/product.

Project description: First, provide a short description that provides us with the main gist of your project (a 150- to 200-word synopsis or abstract). You can then elaborate to include details on objectives and how they were met, design challenges, technological and/or material innovations, social and environmental impact.

Project specs: Indicate dimensions, materials, fabrication techniques, manufacturing process.

Works are excluded from the competition if their presentation would infringe a right. The entrant authorizes Azure Publishing Inc. to publish the submission in the print edition of *Azure Magazine*, on azuremagazine.com, and any websites affiliated with the AZ Awards competition. The submission may be reproduced, in whole or in part, for editorial and promotional purposes.

People's Choice

All finalists are considered for the People's Choice selection, decided by the general public. Voting will take place from April 17 to May 8, 2026 on awards.azuremagazine.com.

Contact

For more information and support:
azawards@azureonline.com

Checklist

Use this document as a guide to help you prepare your 2026 AZ Awards submissions:

☐ Are you eligible?

The AZ Awards is open to architects, designers, landscape architects, urbanists, developers, firms, companies, clients, manufacturers and students of design-related disciplines. All built work must have been completed anytime between Nov. 1, 2022 and Dec. 31, 2026. For Student work: any industrial design product, architectural structure, landscape, interior space or unbuilt/unrealized concept developed by a student enrolled in a post-secondary design or architecture program in 2025.

☐ Select your category

Pick the category best suited for your project. Detailed category descriptions can be found on page 2. You may submit your project in multiple categories – each as a separate entry. **NOTE:** AZURE reviews all entries to ensure they are in the right category. You will be notified if your entry needs to be moved to a different category.

☐ Name your submission (Project Name)

Select a Project Name to represent your project or product.

☐ Select your submission type

- Select Designer/Architect/Developer **if you are** the designer/architect/developer OR **submitting on behalf** of the designer/architect/developer
- Select Client/Manufacturer **if you are** the manufacturer OR **submitting on behalf** of your client or the manufacturer
- Select Student **if you are a student** submitting your work OR if you are submitting on behalf of a student

☐ Describe your submission (Project Description)

Provide a description of your project or product. Include objectives and how they were met, design challenges, social and environmental impact.

☐ Provide technical details about your submission (Project Specs)

Provide a technical description of your project or product. Indicate dimensions, materials, fabrication techniques and/or manufacturing process.

☐ Upload images, drawings or renderings

Provide up to 30 images and or drawings/renderings in jpg format, at least 300 dpi. Make sure to credit the photographer. When submitting images from multiple photographers, include the photographer's name in the file name. If submitting a rendering, please ensure that this is clearly indicated in the file name.

☐ Share a video (Optional but recommended)

You may share a web link to a video related to the project. A video is beneficial, but not required. It could provide the jury with a better representation of your project.

☐ Credit your team (Team Credits)

Provide relevant credits for the team that worked on the project: Involvement/Role, Full Name, Company Name, Email and Country. Please list all team members in the order they should appear and make sure all names are spelled correctly.

☐ Provide a rationale for Special Awards

In addition to the category in which they are submitted, entries may be considered for the Social Good Award and/or Environmental Leadership Award. For more details on requirements for these elective awards, see page 2.

☐ Provide your contact information

The last step is to provide the contact information for those directly related to the project (lead designer, lead architect, etc). **Provide the main contact for verification of credits and fact-checking, should your entry be shortlisted.**

☐ Payment

Full payment must be received by the submission deadline. Entries submitted without the appropriate submission fee will not be eligible for judging. Payments are only accepted online via credit card.

Ready to submit? awards.azuremagazine.com

Early-bird Deadline: **January 23, 2026** / Deadline: **February 13, 2026**

GENERAL TERMS & CONDITIONS

All information and requested materials must be provided by the deadline or the submission will be disqualified without notice or return of payment.

No refunds will be issued under any circumstances.

Works are excluded from the competition if their presentation would infringe a right.

The entrant authorizes Azure Publishing Inc. ("AZURE") to publish the submission in the print edition of AZURE Magazine, on azuremagazine.com, on AZURE's social media channels and on any online platforms affiliated with the AZ Awards competition. The submission may be reproduced, in whole or in part, for editorial and promotional purposes.

By entering the AZ Awards the submitter grants AZURE Publishing Inc. ("AZURE") a royalty-free, transferable worldwide right to use and publish in print, online and on social media, all entries and their corresponding photographs and videos, as well as any photos and/or videos of the submitter and their team members. The submitter also grants AZURE a royalty-free right to share the said entries, photographs and videos with AZURE's international partners who would be posting news about the AZ Awards on their website, newsletter and social channels.

If the photography/videography rights are owned by a party other than the submitter, the submitter must obtain copyright permission on behalf of Azure Publishing Inc. ("AZURE"). When entering the AZ Awards, the submitter indemnifies and holds harmless AZURE Publishing Inc. ("AZURE") and its partners against any claims or causes of action that would allege that the use of the submitter's entries, photos and videos by AZURE and/or AZURE's partners' violates a third party's intellectual property rights.