

2025 AIA Canada Design Awards Guidelines

Submission Deadline: 31 October 2025, before 15:00 EST

Notifications of Winners: November 2025

The AIA Canada Design Awards recognize best practices, innovative thinking, and design excellence in the work of AIA Canada members. This annual program highlights projects that embody innovation, resilience, equity, and beauty, and celebrates architecture that shapes Canada's future.

Award winners will receive:

- Publication in the *AIA Canada Society Journal* (Canadian Architect Magazine)
- Feature on the AIA Canada Society website
- Automatic entry into the 2026 AIA International Awards program at no additional cost (one winning firm)

Categories

Entries must be submitted in one of the categories listed below. These categories clarify the requirements for each group and help focus the jury on the broad and diverse areas of practice.

- **Architecture**
Eligible entries include new construction, renovation, or preservation/restoration projects completed within the last 5 years. For multi-building projects, the submitting Architect must provide detailed evidence of authorship for each portion of the project.
- **Interior Architecture**
Eligible entries include new construction, renovation, or preservation/restoration projects completed within the last 5 years.
- **Special Projects**
Eligible entries follow the criteria of Architecture or Interior Architecture, with a maximum of 5,000 sf and a \$5 million budget.
- **Urban Design**
Eligible entries may include urban design projects, planning programs, civic improvements, campus plans, environmental programs, or redevelopment projects. Projects should not be individual buildings. Incomplete or ongoing programs may be considered if a significant portion has been completed or implemented by a local jurisdiction or authority within the last 5 years.
- **Community-Engaged Design**
Eligible entries must meet the criteria of one of the categories above and demonstrate significant community engagement and collaboration with local social agencies throughout design and construction. Only one project per firm/AIA member may be submitted annually in this category.
- **Open International**
Eligible entries must be located outside of Canada and may include Architecture, Interior Architecture, Urban Design, revitalization, or other types of work. Projects of all scales are accepted if they enhance the built environment in ways that are contextually respectful, sustainable, and crafted to serve as benchmarks globally — or through innovation and ingenuity, as benchmarks for the

profession. Projects must be built work completed within the last 5 years. For multi-building projects (or portions thereof), the submitting Architect must provide detailed evidence of authorship.

- **Unbuilt**

Eligible entries include unbuilt projects designed within the last 5 years that will not proceed to construction due to client, land use, or other factors beyond the architect's control.

Note: This category is not for projects currently under construction or planned for construction. Such projects should be submitted under the Architecture category once completed.

- **Residential (New Category)**

Eligible entries include One- and Two-Family Residences, recognizing outstanding designs for custom and remodeled homes for specific clients, or exemplary design of homes built for the speculative market. (To be Revised)

Jury and Criteria

1. The jury may confer Honor Awards, Merit Awards, and Citations across categories.
2. The jury will include at least three distinguished architects, with a minimum of two AIA members.
3. Entries are evaluated based on:
 - Program and design requirements.
 - Integration within context.
 - Alignment with the **AIA Framework for Design Excellence**. (Projects are not expected to address all measures, but should demonstrate alignment with several.)
4. Criteria of Consideration: Design Quality, Design Resolution, Design Advancement, Social Advancement, Technical Advancement, Environmental Advancement, Preservation/Restoration.
5. Project authorship will remain anonymous during jury deliberations. Submissions that reveal authorship will be disqualified.

Eligibility

1. All AIA Canada Society Architect members in good standing may submit projects located anywhere in the world.
2. AIA International Chapter members may only submit projects within their assigned chapter territory.
3. The Open International category is available to AIA Canada members for projects located outside Canada.
4. Built or Unbuilt work must have been completed or designed within the last 5 years (January 1, 2020 – present).
5. The submitting AIA Canada member must have been in good standing at the time the design was undertaken.
6. The submitting member must be the primary author. All significant collaborators must be credited.
7. Joint ventures or associated architects should submit through one member only, with full credit to all parties.
8. Projects previously honored by another AIA Region are not eligible.
9. Projects cannot be submitted simultaneously to more than one AIA Region.
10. Work by architects or firms serving as jurors in 2025 is ineligible.
11. AIA Canada reserves the right to determine eligibility.

Submission Requirements

1. Images: 3–5 .jpg files, sized 3200 px × 1800 px, minimum 72 dpi. At least one must be a photograph of the built project (if applicable). File names must reflect project name (e.g., 123_Main_Street_1.jpg).
2. Site or Location Plan: Same format and size requirements as above, labeled with project name followed by _site.
3. Project Summary: PDF, maximum 200 words.
4. Community-Engaged Design Description (if applicable): PDF, maximum 200 words, submitted with the Project Summary.
5. Project Information: Project title, address, year of completion (or design for unbuilt), site area, floor area, height, number of floors, and program.
6. Credits: All firms and collaborators listed in format Type of Service: Firm Name.
7. Copyright: Image credits and copyright permissions included.
8. (Optional) PDF Project Portfolio, up to 20 pages (e.g., a marketing package).

Deadlines and Fees

1. Submission Deadline: All submissions and payments must be received by 31 October 2025, before 15:00 EST.
2. Entry Fees:
 - AIA Canada Society Members: \$250 CAD
 - Non-Members (AIA U.S. or International Chapter Members): \$350 CAD (projects must be located in Canada)
 - Community-Engaged Design: Fee waived
 - Students: Retired for 2025
3. Non-Refundable: All entry fees are final and non-refundable.