

DESIGN AWARDS '25



DATES AND DEADLINES

Awards submissions must be uploaded and completed online with payment by 11:59pm

June 23, 2025	Design Award Submissions Open
June-August 2025	Design Awards overview program, Awards office hours and resources available
July 23, 2025	What Submitters Need to Know Webinar 08:15AM EST-9:30AM
September 12, 2025 September 26, 2025	Submission deadline. All Awards submissions must be uploaded and completed online with payment by 11:59pm EST
October-November 2025	Jury reviews, deliberations & award selection
December 2025	Design Award notifications & announcements

FEES *No price increases this year!*

Entry fees are processed at the time of your submission and all fees are non-refundable. Please ensure you allow payment processing time that does not run past the deadline time.

Entry Type	BSA Firm Members	Non-BSA Members	Assoc. AIA or Student
Built Design	\$280	\$560	Not eligible
Small Firms	\$180	\$360	Not eligible
Small Firms + Built Design*	\$180+\$140	\$360+\$280	Not eligible
Unbuilt Planning & Design	\$150	\$300	\$85 Assoc AIA \$50 Student (with ID)

* **Small Firms + Built Design:** Firms with 10 or fewer employees may submit the same project to both categories through the Small Firms + Built Design option, receiving a 50% discount on the Built Design fee. Simply select this category during submission—no separate entry required.

AWARDS

- Honor – Representing the highest level of achievement
- Merit – Representing exceptional design, performance, and intent work
- Commendations – Recognize projects that encompass the values of great design, which may include, but are not limited to, accessibility¹, social responsibility, environmental performance, material choices, community engagement, or resilience.

¹) **Thomas P. Hopkins Memorial Commendation** for public buildings and facilities to which Massachusetts statute 521 CMR applies

2) **William D. Smith Memorial Commendation** for projects that integrate accessibility with historic preservation

Ready to submit? Click [here](#) to begin.



CATEGORIES

- **BUILT DESIGN**– recognizing design excellence in completed projects through clear demonstration of performance, innovation, and impact.
- **SMALL FIRMS** – recognizing design excellence through performance narratives in all completed projects. Eligible for firms of 10 or fewer employees.
- **UNBUILT PLANNING & DESIGN** – recognizing the promise of design excellence in the broadest possible range of research, conceptual exploration and innovation in design thinking for initiated (*completed or incomplete project, where a significant portion has been completed, implemented, or adopted by a local jurisdiction, authority, institution, or private client*) and theoretical projects.

Built Design and Small Firms **project types** can include:

- *Adaptive Reuse, Renovation or Historic Preservation*: Renovations of existing buildings, renovations or preservations of existing buildings, historic preservation of building with a historic background, or buildings where the original intent has been transformed for a new purpose
- *Institutional & Cultural Facilities*: community centers, libraries, museums, healthcare facilities, life science facilities.
- *Commercial*: hospitality, retail, workplace/office spaces.
- *Educational Facilities*: K-12 educational facilities, higher education.
- **Residential**: ADUs, single-family homes, and small residential buildings (up to 5 units).
- **Housing**: Medium and large multifamily housing (5+ units), mixed-use housing projects, and specialized housing types.
- *Interior Architecture*: Shaping interior space using evidence-based design strategies to achieve functional built interior environments.
- *Alternative Projects*: For built work that falls outside the defined project types. If your project type is not listed, you may enter it here for consideration. Juries will review and may decide to place the submission in a category.
- *Urban Design & Master Planning*: planning of public spaces, civic plazas, connections/places between buildings, stadiums, campus plans, regional master plans, redevelopment and environmental programs, placemaking, wayfinding, and infrastructure/transit/mobility.

Unbuilt Planning & Design **project types** can include:

- *Conceptual*: Purely theoretical projects – not commissioned by a client
- *Planning*: Planning, placemaking design, strategic plans, guidelines, infrastructure, tools, processes, or any other project type – must have an actual, identifiable client

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NEW
THIS
YEAR!

Residential &
Housing are
now split

JURY REVIEW

Juries will be composed of architects with diverse expertise in design, building typologies, and varying levels of professional experience. There will be one jury for both Built Design and Small Firm categories, and another for the Unbuilt Planning & Design category. The number of awards in each category is determined at the jury's discretion and may be granted to as many or as few projects as the jury deems worthy. Awards may not be bestowed for every project type. The jury's decisions are final and not subject to review.

Built Design and Small Firms	Unbuilt Planning & Design
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jury reviews submission portfolio, project narrative, and impact statement• Jury bestows awards based on categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jury reviews project boards, narrative and impact statement• Jury bestows awards based on categories

PORTFOLIO GUIDELINES

Project Narrative: 250 words maximum uploaded as a single Word file, embedded within the digital portfolio. Describe the story of the design: the project's intent, design process, constraints, and outcomes. Include key concepts, decisions, and lessons learned, as well as any relevant team collaboration.

Project Portfolio: Up to **10 pages** (Built Design) or **8 pages** (Small Firms) uploaded as a single PDF file and no larger than 25 MB. File to be named: **ProjectName.pdf** and file name no longer than 60 characters (including spacing). **Do NOT include firm or client name.** Photographs should not include text. Photographs and annotated site and building plans should be included.

Project Boards: Up to **3 digital boards** 20" x 20" (Unbuilt Planning & Design), uploaded as a single PDF file no larger than 25 MB. File should be named: *ProjectName.pdf*, with a maximum file name length of 60 characters (including spaces). Do **not** include firm or client names anywhere on the boards. Boards should include diagrams, drawings, site plans, renderings, and other visual materials that clearly communicate the design intent.

Project Impact Statement: 150 words maximum uploaded as a single Word file, embedded within the digital portfolio. In lieu of the Common App, all entrants must include a brief statement describing how the project reflects the BSA's mission to catalyze collaborative innovation to advance equity and sustainability in the built environment. This may include, but is not limited to, topics such as accessibility, social responsibility, environmental performance, material choices, community engagement, or resilience. The statement may take the form of a short paragraph or two bullet points.

NEW
THIS
YEAR!

Common
App
eliminated

Ready to submit? Click [here](#) to begin.

ELIGIBILITY

Anyone meeting eligibility requirements may submit. BSA Firm Members receive special pricing.

	BUILT DESIGN	SMALL FIRM <i>(no more than 10 employees)</i>
	All typologies may be submitted in each division, for with accompanying narratives, impact statements, and design that demonstrate advancement in design excellence measures.	
About	Recognize design excellence in completed projects through clear demonstration of performance, innovation, and impact.	Recognize design excellence through performance narratives and statements in all completed projects.
Timeline	Projects <u>completed</u> within the past 5 years <u>between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2024</u>	
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects by New England (MA, ME, VT, NH, CT, RI) design professionals may be located anywhere. Projects by non-New England design professionals must be located in New England (MA, ME, VT, NH, CT, RI). 	
Submitter(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least one member of the design team must hold a professional architecture license For firms with multiple offices: the primary office producing the work must be the office in New England. SMALL FIRMS may submit the <u>same project</u> to both Small Firms and Built Design categories through the SMALL FIRMS + BUILT DESIGN option, receiving a 50% discount on the Built Design fee. 	
Award Eligibility	Eligible for Honor, Merit, or Commendation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects that have won awards in other programs (i.e. AIA chapter programs) are eligible Projects previously honored with a BSA Design Award are ineligible Previously submitted but unawarded projects may be resubmitted Submitters are encouraged to re-enter projects previously submitted if they did not win an award (if eligible). The BSA is not responsible for errors in submissions. The BSA reserves the right to disqualify entries or projects not submitted in accordance with the stated rules. 	

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	UNBUILT PLANNING & DESIGN	
	Planning	Conceptual
Timeline	Project was <u>initiated</u> between <u>January 1, 2019, and December 31, 2024</u> (must have an actual, identifiable client)	Projects must not be completed, under construction, or intended for construction
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects by New England design professionals may be located anywhere. Projects by non-New England design professionals must be located in New England. 	No restrictions
Timeline	Projects <u>completed</u> within the past 5 years <u>between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2024</u>	
Submitter(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associate AIA members, students, and other unlicensed design professionals may submit projects that do not require the stamp of a licensed professional 	
Award Eligibility	<p>Eligible for Honor, Merit, or Commendation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects that have won awards in other programs (i.e. AIA chapter programs) are eligible Projects previously honored with a BSA Design Award are ineligible Previously submitted but unawarded projects may be resubmitted Submitters are encouraged to re-enter projects previously submitted if they did not win an award (if eligible). The BSA is not responsible for errors in submissions. The BSA reserves the right to disqualify entries or projects not submitted in accordance with the stated rules. 	

DISCLAIMER

By participating in the BSA Design Awards program, all entrants grant the BSA a non-exclusive license to post winning project entries in an online gallery, allowing the public and press to view all competing entries. Additionally, each winner grants the BSA permission to use their entries in connection with the BSA Design Awards program in any media, including but not limited to publications, social media, and BSA-sponsored events or exhibitions of the work. The BSA will not be required to pay any additional consideration or seek any further approval for such use.

Submission to this program implies permission from the project owner and releases the BSA from any responsibility for seeking permissions from owners, photographers, or any project-related stakeholders. Inclusion of photos implies permission from the photographer. Correct attribution is the sole responsibility of the submitter. The BSA is not responsible for errors in submissions and reserves the right to disqualify entries or projects not submitted in accordance with the stated rules.

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