

# Application Requirements for IAUD International Design Award 2026

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The IAUD International Design Awards were established in 2010 in order to promote and champion Universal Design by recognizing and rewarding outstanding achievements and in particular products, services and environments that ensure people of all ages and abilities can enjoy an active, independent and productive life, regardless of age, gender, nationality, ethnicity, culture, ability, customs, religion or other factors.

The goal of IAUD and the Awards program is to foster social structures that are sustainable and universal, favour diversity and inclusion, ensure safety and promote human rights and responsibilities, encourage dialogue, collaboration and co-operation, and ensure the passing-on of appropriate knowledge and skills from one generation to the next.

## JUDGING CRITERIA

The judging criteria has been set by the IAUD International Design Award 2026 Selection Committee as follows;

Push the boundaries of Universal Design in new and exciting directions.

Prioritize high-quality user-based research, in particular direct engagement with disabled users and others at risk of being excluded from the market.

Consciously avoid exclusivity arising from innovations and new technologies, in particular for specific groups of users.

Go beyond conventional 'usability' by identifying specific problems relating to diverse groups of users and delivering solutions to them.

Demonstrate long-term corporate commitment to UD, supported by a company-wide vision and plan to ensure continuing improvement.

Are supported by honest and informative promotional material.

(\*Evidence is required to ensure that user studies and user evaluations have been carried out.)

## WINNING ENTRIES

All entries meeting essential standards of Universal Design will receive an IAUD International Design Award 2026 certificate and citation, be featured on the IAUD website and related publicity and will be granted use of the IAUD International Design Award 2026 Mark.

Outstanding entries will be recognized with Grand, Gold, Silver and Bronze awards presented at a special ceremony.

## ELIGIBILITY

All corporations, organizations, individuals and groups, inside and outside Japan, engaged in innovative UD activities and proposals for achieving a sustainable, harmonious society through the promotion of new and improved concepts in town development, products, and systems are eligible to apply. Specific businesses, teams and other sub-units of corporations and organizations are also eligible. As long as the work or the example of an activity is the applicant's own, it does not matter if it has already been published or presented elsewhere.

## Topics / Categories

1. Universal Design in General (Concept, Philosophy, etc.)
2. Architecture / Regional Planning (Urban Development, Public Space, Parks, etc.)
3. Tourism / Inclusive Culture/ Mobility (Public Transportation, Automobiles, etc.)
4. Housing / Household Equipment / Interior Design
5. Commodities / daily life products / Industrial Design

6. Package Design / Fashion Design
7. Information and Communications / Broadcasting and Mass Media / Graphic Design
8. Software / System Design / Website Design / Interaction Design
9. Ergonomics / Human Engineering / Sensory Engineering / Other Types of Engineering and Technology
10. Health Care and Nursing / Hygiene and Sanitation / Social Welfare Services / Labor
11. Environmental Protection / Ecology / Resources and Energy / Sustainable Design
12. Education and Enlightenment / Ethics and Morality / Standards and Certification / Legislation
13. Disaster Prevention and Rescue / Security and Public Safety / National Defense / International Goodwill / Development Assistance
14. Protection of Human Rights / Administration of Justice / Mutualistic Society / Declining Birthrate and Aging / Gender Equality
15. Dietary Education and Food / Agriculture and Forestry / Livestock Industry / Fishing Industry / Industrial Development
16. Distribution / Currency and Finance / Insurance / etc.

### **Special Categories**

A. Imaging the Future (Conceptual, not Realized Projects)

B. Student Design Challenge (Student Projects)

\*Current students and those within twelve months of graduation are eligible. \*Exemption from payment of screening fees

### **EVALUATION PROCESS**

All entries will be thoroughly evaluated to ensure they meet one or more of the essential goals of the IAUD International Design Awards Program, and successful entries will go before the Jury Panel, who will make the final awards and citations.

### **Essential Goals of the IAUD International Design Awards Program:**

**Sustainable and Universal:** The entry presents concepts and practices suitable for creating a sustainable, mutualistic society.

**Diversity and Inclusion:** The entry shows an understanding of the diversity of traditions, cultures, lifestyles and people, and does not exclude minorities but rather expressly includes them; and thus contributes to realizing a qualitatively rich and happy way of life.

**Safe and Secure Society:** The entry contributes to the construction of mechanisms, systems and morals appropriate to a society that protects human rights and respects the humanity of every individual.

**Spontaneous and Sustainable Dialogue:** The entry serves to build ongoing exchanges and relationships between corporations, design practitioners and clients, government, research institutions, NPOs, and citizens.

**Passing-on of Knowledge and Skills to the Next Generation:** Through disseminating universal design and knowledge about it, the entry serves to cultivate individuals suited to lead the next generation.

NB Any entries that: violate public order and morality or any provisions of laws and regulations; infringe copyright or other rights of a third party; or whose contents the applicant refuses to publish on exhibitions, publications, the Internet, etc.; shall be deemed unacceptable, and should this matter come to light after an award is granted, the award may be withdrawn.

### **Jury Panel**

IAUD International Design Award 2026 Jury Panel, composed of the academic experts, UD specialists, and other knowledgeable individuals (an organization of fair and neutral third parties) will judge the entries rigorously and impartially.

Chair of the Selection Committee: Onny Eikhaug (Founder, Innovation for All AS, Norway)

Co-chair of the Selection Committee: Fumikazu Masuda (President, open house inc. / Visiting Professor, Nagoya University of Arts and Sciences, Japan)

Advisor to the Selection Committee: Roger Coleman (Professor Emeritus of the Royal College of Art, UK)  
Members of the Selection Committee:  
Francesc Aragall (President, Design for All International / Founder, ProAsolutions, S.L., Spain)  
Valerie Fletcher (Executive Director, Institute for Human-Centered Design, USA)  
Rama Gheerawo (Director, INSTILL LTD / President, EIDD Design for All Europe, UK)  
Antika Sawadsri (Dean, School of Architecture, Art, and Design, King Mongkut's Institute of Technology  
Ladkrabang, Thailand)  
Carolyn Pauly (Executive Director, Institute for Universal Design, Germany)  
Keiji Kawahara (Professor Emeritus, Nagoya University of Arts and Sciences / Executive Director, IAUD,  
Japan)

## **Jury Recommendation**

The jury can recommend good practices that deserve the award. Nominated applicants are exempt from the first-round registration fee, but must pay for the second-round registration. For the fairness of the judging, the recommender must decline the judging.

## **ANNOUNCEMENT OF AWARDS AND USE OF AWARD MARK**

The results of the award will be notified to the applicants by the late December 2026 and they will be officially announced at the award ceremony. Those Grand and Gold award winners will also be asked to deliver presentations about their entries. (The date and time of the ceremony and the presentation will be notified on later date.)

The contents of the award-winning entries can be presented in the venue of the ceremony, and, following the official announcement, will be disclosed to the public on IAUD's website, through reports, and by other means. Kindly note that copyright in all reports and publications issued following the awards ceremony will rest with IAUD.

## **IAUD International Design Award Mark use**

All award-winning entries will be granted a free license to use the IAUD International Design Award 2026 Mark during a promotion period (one month) following the awards ceremony, after which the IAUD International Design Award 2026 Mark may be used continuously for public relations purposes upon payment of a royalty.

The IAUD International Design Award 2026 Selection Committee will present IAUD International Design Awards to those entries deemed to meet the judge's expectations in Universal Design. All award-winning entries will be granted use of the IAUD International Design Award mark, which is beneficial in familiarizing people with Universal Design and promoting its ideals.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

### **1st Round**

Download the prescribed application form from our website, fill in the necessary information, and then send the form (preferred format is Microsoft Word) to the IAUD International Design Award 2026 Division, Secretariat of the International Association for Universal Design by email attachment.

The language used on the application form may be either Japanese or English.

For each application, please pay 27,500 JPY including tax as the registration and selection fee.

Please notify the Secretariat if payment of the registration and selection fee is to be delayed.

All expenses related to the application shall be borne by the applicant.

Deadline for the 1st round: August 20, 2026 \*There will be no extension of the application deadline for the 1st round of screening

Address for forwarding documents and making inquiries concerning the 1<sup>st</sup> round:

IAUD International Design Award 2026 Division, Secretariat, International Association for Universal Design

E-mail : [info@iaud.net](mailto:info@iaud.net)

\*Data by Microsoft Word file will be preferred.

## 2nd Round

Applicants who successfully pass the 1st round will be invited to participate in the 2nd round, along with winners from collaborating Universal Design award schemes such as those organised by the Design for All International, Barcelona and the Institut für Universal Design, Munich. If applicants will submit the following supplementary data for the 2nd round, it is requested to send them by email to the IAUD International Design Award 2026 Division, Secretariat of the International Association for Universal Design, and the explanatory data in PDF format, and if any, supplementary video data in preferred format MP4. If you are submitting a large data exceeding 5MB, please submit the data using a high-volume file transfer service.

The language used on the data, etc. may be Japanese or English.

For each application, please pay 72,600 JPY including tax, as the registration and selection fee.

Please notify the secretariat if payment of the registration and selection fee is to be delayed.

All expenses related to the application shall be borne by the applicant.

Deadline for the 2nd round: October 31, 2026

Address for forwarding explanatory data and supplementary video data for the 2nd round:

E-mail : [info@iaud.net](mailto:info@iaud.net)

\*Data by PDF file and MP4 file will be available.

## Registration and application fee

For credit card payment, please follow steps below and finish such procedure until the closing date. Please contact secretariat ([info@iaud.net](mailto:info@iaud.net)) when you pay the fee by the bank transfer. We will issue the invoice. Please make sure to pay the fee by the deadline.

## Schedule

Application period for 1st round      Early June to August 20, 2026

\*There will be no extension of the application deadline for the 1st round of screening

Selection period of 1st round      Late August to Early September, 2026

Notification of selection results      Middle of September, 2026

Application period for 2nd round      October 1st to October 31, 2026

Selection period of 2nd round      November, 2026

Notification of final results      Late December, 2026

\*The award winners will prepare and submit presentation materials in early February, 2027.

Awards / Presentation      Late February, 2027

## About the Application Documents, and Other Matters

As a rule, application documents will not be returned. The contents of application documents, including personal information, will not be used for any purpose other than the selection process. A review of the selection process will be made public including reasons for awarding the prizes to the respective award recipients and comments regarding particularly outstanding aspects of the winning entries. Applicants whose entries sadly miss out on awards this year will also receive brief comments from the IAUD International Design Award 2026 Selection Committee members as to why their entries were not successful. This may be helpful as a reference in preparing future applications. However, inquiries regarding any other matters including details of the selection process and about the names of unsuccessful applicants, and objections to the selection results, will not be accepted.

By submitting an application, an individual agrees to the above conditions.