



Call for Entries: AIA New Jersey 2025 Design Awards

Welcome to the AIA New Jersey Design Awards, where innovation, creativity, and excellence converge to celebrate outstanding architectural achievements throughout the Garden State. This annual program honors the remarkable talent of New Jersey architects and their contributions to shaping a more thoughtful, sustainable, and inspiring built environment.

From bold new visions to meaningful enhancements of our communities, the AIA NJ Design Awards recognize a wide range of work that defines and elevates architecture across the state. This year, we're proud to announce expanded categories to better showcase small-scale projects—acknowledging that great design can happen at any size or scale.

A panel of three distinguished jurors from outside New Jersey will evaluate all submissions and determine this year's award recipients.

Entries are due by 9:00 PM EST on Friday, October 10, 2025

We look forward to celebrating the exceptional design leadership of our members.

CATEGORIES

BUILT PROJECTS

Built Project categories recognize design excellence in various kinds of built architectural projects. Submissions may be a single building, a related group of buildings, interior architecture, additions, restorations, or adaptive use projects. Entries may be eligible in more than one category; however, a separate fee is required for each category submission made, per fee information listed above.

Open

Eligibility: Public and private projects: single buildings, a related group of buildings forming a single project, and additions/renovations including but not limited to commercial, institutional, mixed-use, multi-family, and educational projects.

Residential Design

Eligibility: Single residences and/or accessory buildings, new or remodeled, or any addition.

Preservation

Eligibility: Projects that address design issues related to adaptive use, rehabilitation, reconstruction, or pure restoration.

Interior Architecture

Eligibility: projects of any scope that may be new construction, renovation, preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, or reconstruction, that focus on interior space only.

Built Sustainability

Eligibility: Recognizes excellence in ecological stewardship, including reduced environmental impact and reduced energy consumption, as well as attention to quality-of-life issues, resiliency, and community engagement within the environment. Must demonstrate adherence to a sustainability standard LEED, Green Globes, Passive house or similar. Ideal projects have also met the AIA Design 2030 Commitment Criteria.

Built installation Sculpture or Furniture Piece

Eligibility: Built specialty fabrications, art installations/event, furniture elements, sculptures; objects that are not necessarily buildings or spaces but are created by architects.

Small Projects

Small Projects Design - Budget/Design focus

For projects with construction costs of \$1,500,000 or less and a total area under 2,500 square feet. This category recognizes design excellence within both size and budget constraints.

Small Project Design - Budget Focus

For projects with construction costs of \$750,000 or less, with no limit on square footage. This award highlights innovative and impactful design achieved within modest financial parameters.

Small Project Design - Scale Focus

For projects totaling under 1,500 square feet, with no budget cap. This category celebrates outstanding architecture that demonstrates creative spatial solutions and efficiency at a small scale.

UNBUILT PROJECTS

Unbuilt architectural designs, for which there is no current intent to build, of any project type, including purely theoretical, visionary projects, with or without a client.

REGIONAL AND URBAN DESIGN

Eligibility: urban design projects, planning programs, civic improvements, campus plans, Master plans, environmental programs or redevelopment projects. Examples might be research, policy development and implementation, community initiatives or charrettes, and input and assessment tools.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible, submissions must comply with all items under Criteria 1 and at least one item from Criteria 2 below.

CRITERIA 1:

1. The individual submitting is the lead architect on that project. 'Lead Architect' is defined as the main client contact.
2. The project, or submitted work, must have been completed after June 30, 2021. "Completed" is defined as "substantial completion" in accordance with standard AIA documents.
3. Projects that have previously received an AIA NJ Award in any category are not eligible.
4. Credit must be given to:
5. contributing architectural firms
6. A list of contributing consultants can also be included.

CRITERIA 2:

1. An AIA New Jersey member whose practice is in New Jersey may submit projects from any location.
2. An AIA New Jersey member who practices outside of New Jersey may submit projects from any location.
3. An AIA member from any state may submit projects located within New Jersey.
4. Only AIA and Associate AIA New Jersey members are eligible for the Unbuilt category. "Unbuilt" is defined as competitions or projects that are not intended to be built. If your project wins in this category and at some point, is built, it cannot be submitted for consideration in any other category in the future.

SUBMISSIONS:

New required information for 2025 submissions:

All Project submissions must provide:

- Project Budget
- Project Square Footage
- Project Goals and how they were addressed
- Brief Narrative on how submitted project addresses 3 of the 10 principles of the AIA's Framework for Design Excellence

Sustainability project submissions will require:

- Information on how the project demonstrates excellence in ecological stewardship, sustainability and/or resilience.
- Information on sustainability certificates or performance standards this project has achieved or pursued.

Preservation project submissions will require:

- Information on how the project respects and retains the historical, cultural or architectural significance of the original structure or site.
- Information on how the project balances contemporary use with historic authenticity.

MATERIALS

All materials must be submitted through an online submission form, one high resolution image and one 8.5 x 11 Project PDF (maximum of 10 pages) and should include the following information:

- One page project information sheet stating project name, project address, and date of completion along with a 70-word project synopsis and 400-word project narrative.
- Do not include the design firm's name or logo.
- Include applicable photographs, plans or images such as
- Site Plans and context. Include graphics scale and North Arrow.
- Before/After Photos
- Building Sections and/or details (where informative)
- Photographs showing all exterior elevations which may reasonably be seen by a viewer circumnavigating the project.
- Concept Sketches
- Interior/Exterior Photographs

Pages can be composed with multiple images or individual images on page. Captions are helpful.

FEES

The fee to participate is \$150 for the first design submission and \$100 for each additional submission. You may submit a project in multiple categories at a fee of \$150 for the first submission and \$100 for each additional category. **HOWEVER**, you can only win in **ONE** category with that particular project. You may submit unlimited projects

SCHEDULE

- Submission Deadline: October 10, 2025; 9pm EST
- Announcement of Award Winners: Fall DesignNite , Fall Date TBD
- Awards Ceremony: Annual Installation and Awards Gala on Saturday, January 17, 2026 at Collingswood Grand Ballroom.

