AIA South Carolina

2025 AIASC DESIGN & CHAPTER AWARDS

SUMMARY

INTENT

AIASC has a long tradition of recognizing individuals, organizations, and projects for exemplifying the very best in architecture. The AIA believes that awards programs should be carefully structured so that selection and recognition of honorees serve two distinct purposes: one directed to the profession, and the other, to the public. By focusing attention on activity within the profession, the general quality of architectural practice is elevated. By informing the public on the breadth and value of architectural practice, the entire profession is held in higher esteem. AIASC achieves this purpose by establishing and sponsoring the following awards:

I. Design Awards - Professional

- New Construction/Substantial Renovation Award
  - Under 5,000 SF
  - Over 5,000 SF
- Small Project/Design Detail Award
- Urban Design/Master Planning Award
- Robert Mills Residential Design Award
  - New Construction
    - Under $1 Million
    - Over $1 Million
  - Renovation/Addition
    - Under $500,000
    - Over $500,000
- Adaptive Reuse/Preservation Award
- Interior Architecture Award
- Unbuilt Project Award
- Twenty-Five Year Award
- F4DE Award

II. Design Awards - Student

- Student Project Award

III. Chapter Awards - Members

- Associate Award
- Firm Award
- Medal of Distinction
- Social Justice Award (also open to nonmembers)

IV. Chapter Awards - Nonmembers

- Patron Award
- Community Collaboration Award

See the "Categories" tab on the website for descriptions of each of the Design Awards and the Chapter Awards subcategories.

FRAMEWORK FOR DESIGN EXCELLENCE (for Professional Design Awards only)

Developed by members of the AIA, the **Framework for Design Excellence** represents the defining principles of good design in the 21st century. It's intended to be accessible and relevant for every architect, every client, and every project — regardless of size, typology, or aspiration. The 10 measures that make up the Framework are intended to inspire progress toward a zero-carbon, equitable, resilient, and healthy built environment.

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Entrants in the AIASC Design Awards are required to provide a description of how their project addresses at least 1 of the 10 measures, listed below with optional prompts, in no more than 800 words.

1. **Design for Integration**: What is the big idea behind this project and how did sustainability inform the design concept?
2. **Design for Equitable Communities**: How does this project contribute to creating a walkable, human-scaled community inside and outside the property lines?
3. **Design for Ecosystems**: In what ways does the design respond to the ecology of its place?
4. **Design for Water**: How does the project relate to the regional watershed?
5. **Design for Economy**: How does the project efficiently meet the program and design challenges and provide "more with less"?
6. **Design for Energy**: Is the project energy-efficient and sustainable while improving building performance, function, comfort, and enjoyment?
7. **Design for Wellness**: How does the design promote the health of the occupants?
8. **Design for Resources**: How did the design team optimize the amount and makeup of material used on the project?
9. **Design for Change**: Is the building resilient, and able to easily accommodate other uses in 50-100 years?
10. **Design for Discovery**: What lessons for better design have been learned through the process of project design, construction, and occupancy, and how have these been incorporated in subsequent projects?

Click here to learn more about the Framework.

SUSTAINABILITY (for Professional Design Awards only)

AIASC would like to recognize projects that meet these significant achievements. This will appear as a checkbox on the submission form.

AIA 2030 Commitment Project

Projects that demonstrate meeting the criteria of the AIA 2030 Commitment. The project would have to have been submitted to the AIA 2030 Commitment with at least an 80% fossil fuel reduction.

Click here to learn more about AIA 2030 Commitment.

Zero-Carbon Project

Projects that demonstrate achieving a "zero-carbon" energy balance of carbon-free energy consumption.

In a ZNC building, carbon-based energy consumption is reduced first through building design strategies and efficiency measures, then through on-site renewable energy generation, and finally through procurement of locally produced off-site renewable energy.

By establishing a zero-carbon, this ZNC definition can apply to *all* new and existing building types, including those with limited on-site renewable energy capacity, such as buildings in dense urban environments.

Click here to learn more about Zero-Carbon.

ELIGIBILITY

All entries in the **Design Awards - Professional** category group shall be projects executed and designed by AIASC members, or project teams consisting of at least one AIASC member in good standing and with an office in South Carolina. Projects may have been executed anywhere in the United States or abroad and must have been substantially completed after January 1, 2019. The number of entries submitted by a firm or individual is not limited. Projects that have previously won an AIASC award are not eligible in that category. All projects, regardless of size, budget, style, building type, or location, are eligible. Entries are welcomed and encouraged from both established and new practitioners at any size firm.

All entries in the **Design Awards - Student** category shall be projects executed and designed by students currently enrolled in an architecture degree program, or those who have graduated after January 1, 2024. Students may enter individually or in teams and must be sponsored by an instructor or professor who is an AIASC member in good standing.

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All nominations for the **Chapter Awards–Member** and **Chapter Awards-Nonmember** shall be made by an AIASC member in good standing. All nominees for a **Chapter Award-Member** must be a member of AIASC in good standing.

UNPAID LABOR DECLARATION POLICY FOR DESIGN AWARDS ENTRANTS

If you cannot answer 'Yes' to the Unpaid Labor Declaration Policy below, you are not eligible to submit for the Design Awards. Please contact adrienne@aiasc.org should you have any questions concerning our Unpaid Labor Declaration policy.

"The firm does not utilize, employ, or otherwise engage labor that is unpaid, including working students, and neither does any firm of which the candidate is an owner or manager, in part or in whole.

The firm acknowledges this wording shall cover all persons working under their employ, regardless of position or title. Exceptions recognized by Federal law (such as legally defined internships or educational cooperative programs) are exempt from this Policy.

The firm further acknowledges that they have not utilized any unpaid labor as defined above for any work submitted for this awards program. The submitter personally acknowledges adherence to the terms of this Policy."

DESIGN AWARDS JURY

The 2025 AIASC Design Awards Jury Chair will be Brandon F. Pace FAIA, with Sanders Pace Architecture in Knoxville, TN.

The Design Awards Jury will convene in March 2025. Awards will be presented during the **AIASC Annual Meeting & Awards Celebration** at the Center for Architecture in Columbia on May 2, 2025.

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AWARDS CATEGORIES

A. DESIGN AWARDS CATEGORIES

DESIGN AWARDS - PROFESSIONAL

AIA South Carolina has a long-standing tradition of recognizing a broad range of architecture activity that exemplifies the values of South Carolina architects and improves the quality of the built environment in the communities we serve. The annual award program seeks to highlight the diverse range of project types that exist within the state. The AIA believes that awards programs should be carefully structured so that the selection and recognition of honorees elevates the general quality of architectural practice, establishes a standard of excellence against which all architects can measure performance, and informs the public of the importance of design.

Each entry will be judged for the success of the solution to the problems presented by the project and its worthiness, as determined by the jury, for an award of excellence in architecture. Awards will be classified into eight categories for publicity and organization purposes. The categories will be New Construction, Small Project/Design Detail, Urban Design/Master Planning, Robert Mills Residential Award, Adaptive Reuse/Preservation, Interior Architecture, and Unbuilt Projects, and the Twenty-Five Year Award. Firms can enter a project in more than one category but must pay the associated fees for each entry. Jury retains the right to reclassify projects. Information on each category is provided below. Additional citations or project recognition may be awarded at the discretion of the jury. The written project description should provide basic information about the project and verbally convey the design concept to the jury. Information requested in the awards subcategory descriptions should be addressed clearly. Project descriptions should not provide information which discloses or identifies project team members.

Projects, excluding Unbuilt or Student entries, may be executed anywhere in the United States or abroad and must have been substantially completed after January 1, 2019.

New Construction/Substantial Renovation (over and under 5,000 SF)
Projects submitted in this category will include a broad range of types, such as Commercial, Educational, Multifamily, Housing, Institutional, or Faith-based Architecture. Renovations and addition projects are eligible, but the project scope must be clearly and accurately presented through graphics and written descriptions. Projects eligible for an Adaptive Reuse/Historic Preservation Award are not eligible for this category.

Submissions in the New Construction category will be entered into two subcategories based on project gross square footage: under 5,000 SF and over 5,000 SF.

Small Project/Design Detail
Projects submitted in this category include architectural details, furniture, objects, works of environmental art, or designs under 1,000 SF or under $100,000 in gross project cost. New construction, renovations, additions, and projects that are within the scope of a larger project are eligible, but the project scope must be clearly and accurately presented through graphics and written descriptions. Projects in this category are eligible for Honor and Merit Awards.

Urban Design/Master Planning
Projects submitted in this category include municipal master plans, civic improvements, private development plans, campus plans, environmental programs, redevelopment projects, and transportation plans that have a significant urban design or master planning component. Urban Design/Master Planning projects should not be individual buildings. Projects that involve changes to existing context are eligible, but project scope must be clearly and accurately presented through graphics and written descriptions. Projects in this category are eligible for Honor and Merit Awards.

Robert Mills Residential Design Award
Projects submitted in this category will include single family residential projects or multi-family projects of no more than (4) units. Larger multi-family projects will be categorized under New Construction or Adaptive Reuse. Renovation and addition projects are eligible, but the project scope must be clearly and accurately presented through graphics and written descriptions.

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Submissions in the Robert Mills Residential Design Award category will be entered into four subcategories based on gross project cost:

- New Construction under $1 million
- New Construction over $1 million
- Renovation or Addition under $500,000
- Renovation or Addition over $500,000

Adaptive Reuse / Historic Preservation
Projects submitted in this category may be of any project type (Commercial, Educational, Residential, etc.) but should include either a renovation within an existing building or a new construction that expands an existing structure or site. Projects that have been recognized for historical value through inclusion in Historic Districts or listing on Historic Registers should identify the type and reason for recognition in the written project description. Projects that do not have official recognition or designation are also eligible and should outline the historical significance in the project description. The intent of this award is to recognize thoughtful interventions or restorations that create a synergy between old and new construction. Routine maintenance, such as painting or reroofing, is not considered restoration work for the purposes of this award. Projects eligible for a New Construction award are not eligible for this category.

Interior Architecture
Projects submitted in this category should illustrate outstanding building interiors created by architects. These projects may include new construction or renovations of existing construction. Multiple entries may be submitted, but individual rooms or spaces within the same project shall be considered as one project.

Unbuilt Project
Projects submitted in this category may be unbuilt architectural designs of any project type or conceptual design studies that investigate a specific topic or project type for research purposes. Unbuilt client-sponsored projects (commercial or residential buildings, interiors, transportation, infrastructure, monuments, etc.) are eligible for recognition. **Projects under construction or otherwise apparently assured of construction are not eligible.** Project descriptions for Unbuilt Projects shall include a brief statement on the purpose of the project (competition, unrealized project for a client, theoretical investigation, etc.), and for client-sponsored projects include information describing why the project will remain unbuilt (lack of funding, change of design direction, etc.). All client-sponsored projects must submit a release from the owner. Projects cannot have been undertaken for academic credit or as a non-commissioned design competition entry.

Twenty-Five Year Award
The Twenty-Five Year Award recognizes completed building projects — individual or groups of buildings — completed at least 25 but not more than 50 years ago. The projects must have been designed by firms with architects registered and practicing professionally in South Carolina. The award honors one exemplary architectural project that stands the test of time and continues to set standards of excellence for its architectural design and significance, both in its original form and by today's standards. The project should retain its original design intent, demonstrate resilience, relevance, and continued use, and showcase lasting influence on architectural practice, the built environment, and the community. Projects must be completed after January 1, 1974, and before December 31, 1999.

Entries must be nominated or submitted by a current AIA South Carolina member. Nominations may be made by any AIA South Carolina member; the nominator does not need to be the original architect of the project. Nominations should include relevant documentation, such as photographs, project descriptions, and supporting materials demonstrating the project's lasting significance and the above criteria. The award is conferred on the building(s) and the original design firm.

F4DE Award
Projects are not submitted directly to this category. Projects that excel at one or more of the ten measures that make up the Framework for Design Excellence are automatically eligible for this award. A project can be awarded both an award in the category in which it was submitted and the F4DE award in the same year.

DESIGN AWARD - STUDENT

Projects submitted in the **Student Project Award** category should be the work of students currently enrolled in architecture degree program, or those who have graduated after January 1st, 2024. Projects must have been completed in pursuit of a degree or academic credit. Entrants must be sponsored by a professor at their university. Group projects are eligible for recognition and will be considered as a group submission. All group members should be credited on the submission form.

B. CHAPTER AWARDS CATEGORIES

MEMBER RECOGNITION AWARDS (Chapter Awards - Member)

AIA South Carolina has a long-standing tradition of recognizing individuals, organizations, and projects for exemplifying the very best in architecture. The AIA believes that awards programs should be carefully structured so that selection and recognition of honorees serve two distinct purposes: one directed to the profession, and the other to the public. By focusing attention on activity within the profession, the general quality of architectural practice is elevated. By informing the public on the breadth and value of architectural practice, the entire profession is held in higher esteem. AIASC achieves this purpose by establishing and sponsoring the following chapter awards. All chapter awards are conferred by the AIASC Board of Directors.

Associate Award

Nominees for the Associate Award must be sponsored by an AIASC member in good standing. Award may be given to an Associate AIASC member in good standing recognized as having demonstrated exceptional leadership and made significant contributions to the profession early in their career, or, having made a major accomplishment in the Architect Experience Program and distinguishing themselves professionally by not just meeting the requirements of the program but surpassing them. The award may be based on professional, technical, and personal accomplishments.

Medal of Distinction

The Medal of Distinction is the highest honor that AIA South Carolina can bestow upon an AIASC member. The AIA South Carolina Board of Directors confers it in recognition of a significant body of work and/or service that has made a lasting influence on the practice of architecture in South Carolina. Any member is eligible, living or deceased. An AIASC member in good standing must make nominations to the Board. These individuals and or entities should have consistently demonstrated the spirit of strategic cooperation through their teamwork and partnership in the design and building process.

Firm Award

The Firm Award is the highest honor that AIASC can bestow upon a South Carolina architectural firm. The AIA South Carolina Board of Directors confers it in recognition of a significant body of work, an equitable firm culture that supports the growth and development of its people, and service that has had a lasting influence on the practice of architecture in South Carolina. Any firms with principals who are members of AIASC are eligible. An AIASC member in good standing must make nominations to the Board. The Board will consider firms, regardless of size, which are deserving of recognition for design excellence, contribution to the profession of architecture, and continuity of service to the AIA and to the public.

Social Justice Award (Member & Non-Member)

Nominees for the Social Justice Award must be sponsored by an AIASC member in good standing. Award may be given to an AIA member or community group, organization, or public entity that has demonstrated the power of a participatory design process to eliminate inequities in the built environment. This award may be given to an individual or group for distinguished work embodying social responsibility to actively address relevant issues. Recipients may be recognized for work addressing equity, diversity, inclusiveness, universal access, affordable housing, or a variety of other social issues. Nominees for this award will be reviewed by the AIASC Equity in Architecture Committee, which will make a recommendation to the AIASC Board of Directors for conferment.

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION AWARDS (Chapter Awards – Non-Member)

Throughout its history, AIA South Carolina has recognized individuals and organizations outside the field of architecture for service to society and a commitment to elevating public awareness and demand for design excellence in the community. In 2018, AIASC introduced two new awards to honor those non-architects who exemplify these traits.

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Patron Award
Bestowed upon elected officials, public administrators, or community leaders who contribute to the development of laws, regulations, or policies that affect architecture, or the public's perception of architecture, as an important part of our environment, lifestyle, and heritage. Included is advocacy for design excellence in such policies and work to nurture the evolution of public perception and appreciation for design quality.

Community Collaboration Award
Bestowed upon programs, institutions, or individuals who advance the public understanding and appreciation of design in the built environment, or for a project exhibiting exceptional engagement of the community in the design process. The Community Collaboration Award will recognize the important role of the public, the communities and neighborhoods within which we practice, in the development of projects and their ultimate success. Engagement of communities in the design process brings value to the work of AIASC members.

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2025 AIASC DESIGN & CHAPTER AWARDS DATES & FEES

SCHEDULE

February 5, 2025	Awards portal opens at https://aiascawards.secure-platform.com/a
March 5, 2025	**Deadline for early bird** discounted entry fees.
March 14, 2025	Submissions must be completed no later than 11:59 p.m. ET
May 2, 2025	**Awards Celebration.** Professional Design Award Winners will not be announced prior to the Awards Celebration, and all entrants are expected to attend this exciting event.

DESIGN AWARDS FEES

New Construction/Substantial Renovation, Small Project/Design Detail, Urban Design/Master Planning, Robert Mills Residential Design, Interior Architecture, and Adaptive Reuse/Historic Preservation:
$195 per submission until March 5 ($225 *after March 5*)

Unbuilt Project Award:
$125 per submission until March 5 ($150 *after March 5*)

Twenty-Five Year Award, Student Project Award:
No registration fee

CHAPTER AWARDS FEES

Associate Award:
$65 per submission until March 5 ($75 *after* March 5)

Firm Award:
$350 per submission until March 5 ($375 *after* March 5)

Medal of Distinction, Social Justice Award, Patron Award, Community Collaboration Award:
No registration fee

REFUND POLICY
No refunds will be issued for Design Awards or Chapter Awards submission fees.

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REGISTRATION & SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Registration, payment, and file upload will all be handled through OpenWater, an online awards management software that will help to streamline the submission process. OpenWater will host a gallery of all submissions for review by the jury.

There are two parts, or "rounds", to entering your project in the OpenWater system. The first part is registering and paying for your entry. If you haven't yet created an OpenWater account, you will be prompted to do so when you register your first entry. The second part is the submission round where you will enter detailed information and upload image files and release forms for your project, or supporting materials for your nomination.

REGISTRATION

Online registration and submission will open on Feb 5, 2025; submissions must be received no later than midnight on March 14, 2025.

To take advantage of discounted early bird rates, register your entry by March 5, 2025.

The registration form will ask for a project/nomination name. You will have an opportunity to provide a project name on the submission form if you want to change it to an anonymized name for the jury.

After completing the registration form, click on "add to cart" to proceed to the "review and checkout" payment page. If you are paying by check, follow the instructions on the payment page and please note we must receive your payment no later than March 14. You will receive an email from "awards@aiasc.org" confirming that we have received your registration.

SUBMISSION

After you've registered and paid for your entry, you can continue to submit nomination or project information and file uploads by clicking on the "Click to Continue" link at the top of the page - or return to your submission at any time before the entry deadline on March 14.

Please note: you may register an entry after the March 5 early-bird deadline, but the fee will increase (see Dates & Fees tab on the website for more information). **No entries will be accepted after March 14!**

Compile each CHAPTER AWARDS entry with the following:

- **Nominee Information.** Provide contact information for the individual or firm you are nominating.
- **Letter of Recommendation.** Provide a letter in support of the individual or firm you are nominating. (If you have other letters you would like to include in the submission, you can upload them in the "Additional Supporting Documents" field on the submission form.)
- **Supporting Document.** Upload a PDF of any supporting material (images, text, etc.) for your nomination. Files cannot exceed 10MB.
- **Headshot of Nominee**

Compile all the items listed above and create or log in to your OpenWater account to start a new submission. Select the appropriate Chapter Award category and complete all forms in this section, entering in nominee information and uploading your letter of recommendation and supporting document(s). All line items and upload boxes are required, unless otherwise noted.

After you have saved and finalized your submission, you will receive an email confirmation that we have received it along with a reminder that if you chose to pay by check we must receive your payment by March 14 for your nomination to be considered by the AIASC Board of Directors for a Chapter Award.

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Compile each DESIGN AWARDS entry with the following:

- **Short Project Description.** Provide a short description of the project in 100 words or less. This description will serve as the introduction to your project during the first round of jury deliberations.
- **Architect's Statement.** Provide a narrative of the project concerning the design program and solution in 800 words or less. This statement will give the jury a more detailed description of your project and may be referred to during the second round of judging.
- **Framework for Design Excellence Narrative.** In no more than 800 words, provide a description of how your project addresses any of the 10 measures of the Framework. See above in the Summary section for a list of optional prompts for each of the 10 measures. *(For professional design awards only.)*
- **Project Images**. A maximum of twelve (12) JPG images, 10MB max. each, that are 16:9 and at least 300 dpi. See below for detailed instructions and "tips." Prior to uploading, name each image file with the project title and image number (for example, "Project X – Image 1")
- **Jury Image**. One (1) JPG image, 10MB max., that will be used as a reference to your project during jury deliberations. This file should be labeled with the project title and "Jury Image" (for example, "Project X - Jury Image").
- **Public Display Image.** One (1) JPG image, 10MB max., that will be used when publicizing Design Awards winners and entrants. This file should be labeled with the project title and "Public Display Image" (for example, "Project X - Public Display Image"). **This is the ONLY image that may show your firm name and/or logo.**
- **Center for Architecture Display Board.** One (1) high-resolution JPG file (300 dpi at actual size or greater). This will be used to display the project at the Center for Architecture. Please download and use the template provided. Projects that do not use the template will not be displayed. This will not be used to judge your project. Template provided.
- **Photo Release Form.** Required for all categories except Unbuilt and Student Design Awards. Each photographer per submission should have their own release. (You can download this form during the submission process.)
- **Client Release Form.** Required for the Unbuilt project category only. Each project should have their own release. (You can download this form during the submission process.)
- **For Student Project Awards**, you'll need to provide the name and contact info of the professor or instructor who is sponsoring your entry.

Detailed Instructions for the Jury Presentation File:

It is your responsibility to make sure the architect's name and/or firm name is not revealed on any of the file names, images, plans, or narratives - failure to follow this requirement will automatically disqualify the entry.

When possible, images should include the building in use and the following in any order to best tell the jury your project's story:

- **preservation/restoration projects - only** (if applicable) may upload an additional two images (not to exceed 14 images total) to provide the jury with sufficient information to differentiate between the original architects' work and the newly altered, preserved, or restored work
- one image showing each exposed side of the building or environment
- one additional image showing the context of each exposed side of the building (may be omitted if the project's relationship to its context is defined clearly in other prints)
- for a group of buildings, one image of the project is sufficient to illustrate the complete project, including its relationship to its environs
- for projects involving exterior alterations, one image of each altered, exposed side together with one image of the same side before alteration (unless evidence is submitted on the unavailability of the latter)

- at least one interior image for each major functional space
- conceptual diagrams, elevations, floor plans, sections, and site plan (including North arrow)

Please note: images submitted should accurately reflect built conditions. Images that have been digitally or otherwise altered to obscure or misrepresent built project conditions will be disqualified.

Additional Tips

- composite pages are acceptable
- text/notes on images/drawings are allowed
- indicate the scale used on any drawings or plans
- renderings need to be labeled as such, in particular those that may represent unbuilt elements of the project

Compile all the items listed above and create or log in to your OpenWater account to start a new submission. Select the appropriate Design Award category and complete all forms in this section, entering in project information and file uploads. All line items and upload boxes are required, unless otherwise noted.

After you have saved and finalized your submission, you will receive an email confirmation that we have received it along with a reminder that **if you chose to pay by check we must receive your payment by March 14** for your entry to be considered by the AIASC Design Awards Jury.

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AWARDS & PUBLICITY

Awards will be announced and presented during the **AIASC Annual Meeting & Awards Celebration on May 2, 2025 in Columbia**. Professional Design Award Winners will **not** be announced prior to the Awards Celebration, and all participants are expected to join this exciting event. Certificates for all award-winning projects will be presented at the awards ceremony. Winners of Design Awards will receive three certificates: one for the architect, one for the owner, and one for the contractor. Winners of Student Design Awards will receive one certificate per student listed in the credits. Additional certificates will be available at the expense of the award recipient.

AIASC intends to publish all design award entries. Therefore, it is essential that drawings and photographs not be restricted against publication. It is the entrant's responsibility to clear all drawings and photographs for release. A form will be provided to you to secure the necessary permission. With your online submission, please include a separate JPG file containing one Public Display Image titled with your entry number. This can be a photograph or a collection of images that best represent the project and will be used publicly - online, electronically, and/or in print media.

Winning projects will be featured in the OpenWater online Gallery and AIASC publications of varying media in throughout 2025 and into 2026.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

- All information will be used *as entered* in the submission form on the website gallery and for publication. Please be thorough and consistent in completing your field entries and double-check for spelling errors.
- No logos or any other information that identifies the architect/firm is to appear anywhere in the Project Information section (Short Project Description, Architect's Statement, Framework for Excellence Narrative) or the Uploads Materials for Jury Review section (Jury Presentation File and Jury Image) - with the exception of the Public Display Image.
- Please be sure to confirm the exact wording of firm (including all associated architecture firms), owner, contractor and/or consultant names and titles.
- Use "N/A" or other appropriate text in required fields on the submission form if there is no info or it's not pertinent to your project.