



Third Edition 2026

The UIA Award for Innovation in Architectural Education

Brief

Following the success of the inaugural award (2019-2021) and the second edition (2021-2023) which were presented at the UIA World Congresses in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) and Copenhagen (Denmark) respectively, the International Union of Architects (UIA) is pleased to announce the third edition of the UIA Award for Innovation in Architectural Education, organised by the [UIA Architectural Education Commission](#). The Award was established in 2019 to celebrate the multifaceted nature of innovation across the boundaries of cultures and geographies, and to promote inspiring pedagogical practices that contribute to the creation of sustainable environments.

Concept and Objectives

Open to colleges, schools, departments, or programmes of architecture worldwide, the third edition of the UIA Award for Innovation in Architectural Education will recognise excellence in architectural and urban design education, focusing on innovative pedagogies that foster contributions to realising the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals across the five UIA regions, while reflecting their broad diversity. Aligning with the [UNESCO-UIA Charter for Architectural Education \(updated July 2023\)](#), the Award emphasises the role of architecture education in addressing the societal and environmental challenges facing the built environment, and in articulating the opportunities those challenges create.

This edition recognises the multitude of factors influencing the development of sustainable environments, which include focus areas ranging from climate action to health; from inclusivity and migration to community development; and from resource efficiency to heritage conservation.

Evaluation Criteria

Architectural education in the 21st century demands creativity and innovation; research and investigation; collaboration and civic engagement; environmental awareness and technical competence. Submissions for this edition of the award **must** therefore demonstrate:

- **Excellence in Pedagogical Practice** based on evidence of pedagogical innovation and enhanced learning outcomes;
- **Excellence in Addressing Sustainable Development Goals** based on evidence of innovation in content and teaching delivery, identifying challenges, and development of solutions.

In demonstrating excellence, entries should consider evidencing and documenting how the pedagogical programme addresses and delivers across the following areas:

1. **Innovative Pedagogy:** by adopting and implementing pedagogical approaches that respond to current global debates in areas that may include health, heritage, digital tools, collaboration,

trans disciplinary, specific user group (children, youth, elderly), community and civic engagement, or a combination of one or more such areas.

2. **Impactful Inquiry:** by demonstrating students' inquisitiveness in ways that inspire a commitment to addressing social and environmental challenges.
3. **Inclusive Learning:** by discerning and effectively enhancing the diversity of student learning needs, thus offering multiple learning opportunities.
4. **Research-Driven Design Education:** by integrating findings from architectural research, scholarship, and professional practice in ways that add value to the learning environment.
5. **Interdisciplinary Engagement:** by engaging with and potentially contributing to the established body of knowledge through working effectively across disciplines.
6. **Contextual Responsiveness:** by articulating strategic and operational priorities of the context or region in which the school/programme operates.

Eligibility

- The Award addresses university level professional education in architecture which could be any recognised study programme for professional architectural education worldwide. This includes university level independent schools/programmes or schools/programmes within public or private universities.
- The school/programme must have been established for at least ten years.
- The school/programme must offer a professional degree in architecture, which is recognized by its local higher education authorities and/or local validation/accreditation body.
- UNESCO-UIA validation is not a requirement for entry.

The Award Management Team (award manager and technical committee) will examine the submissions considering eligibility criteria before presenting them for review and assessment by the International Jury Panel. Entries not meeting the eligibility criteria will be disqualified.

Key Dates

8 October 2025	Award launch and announcement
26 November 2025	Deadline for receiving questions (questions must be submitted to awards@uia-architectes.org)
15 December 2025	A list of FAQ and responses to Questions is made available on the UIA website.
15 February 2026	Submission deadline to the UIA online platform
15-25 February 2026	Examination of eligibility of entries.
01-15 March 2026	Evaluation of entries and online jury meetings
17 April 2026	Announcement of results
29 June-2 July 2026	Awards Ceremony during the UIA Congress in Barcelona, Spain (29 June 2026 – 1 July 2026).

Submission Requirements

The UIA Education Commission encourages schools and programmes worldwide to submit to the award. An International Jury Panel will assess submissions through an all-digital process. Work submitted should have been completed between 2022 and 2025 in order to ensure currency.

1. A 250-word (maximum) Brief

On the history, vision, and mission of the school/programme, as well as the title of the submission. This should represent a statement of ethos and position. The file must include NO images. The brief must be submitted as a PDF and must include:

- Name of the school, programme and name of the university, city and country
- Name of the head of school/department/programme
- Date that the academic work was completed.

2. A 1,000-word (maximum) Statement

Articulating response the two criteria:

- *Excellence in innovation in pedagogical practice*
- *Excellence in addressing sustainable development goals*

The statement must be submitted as a PDF file. It must include the project title, the nature of the challenges addressed, the pedagogical approach, the response, its significance, reach and impact.

3. Graphics submission

Four (4 pcs) A3 posters (portrait format) that visually illustrate the innovative approach adopted. All 4 posters must be submitted as a single PDF format. Posters will be reviewed individually but may be developed as components of a larger A1 poster for purposes of exhibition.

4. Endorsement letter from the Head of the School

This letter endorses the entry and must be submitted as a PDF file and must include the exact identifying information listed in the 250-word and the articulation statements.

The endorsement letter must also include a statement that grants the UIA the rights to share and edit the credited submission for professional dissemination purposes. The UIA may publish the entries on its website, in exhibitions, press releases, social media, publications and other communications.

5. Maximum file size is 5 MB

All materials must be fully uploaded to the [UIA online platform](#) before 12 noon (CET) 30 January 2026.

NOTE:

Entries will be anonymised by the UIA Secretariat before making them available to the international jury panel members.

Intellectual Property

Intellectual property of the entry will remain the exclusive ownership of the school. In the endorsement letter included in the entry and endorsed by the Head of the School or Programme, within the statement may identify specific items of the entry that they do not wish to disclose publicly. Endorsement letters will not be shared with the jury until after the adjudication is complete.

International Jury Panel

Management Team

Award Manager and Curator (non-voting)

- Ashraf M. Salama, Co-director, UIA Architectural Education Commission (United Kingdom/Egypt)

Technical Committee (non-voting) members.

- Selma Harrington Co-director, UIA Architectural Education Commission (Ireland)
- Kevin Bingham (South Africa)
- Kaname Yanagisawa (Japan)

Jury Members

- Jana Revedin, Advisor, UIA Architectural Education Commission (Germany) R1 (UIA Representative)
- James B Brown (Sweden) R1
- Karine Dupre (United States) R3
- Lindy Osborne Burton (Australia) R4
- Jolanda Morkel (South Africa) R5

The Chair of the jury will be elected in the first panel meeting.

Alternate Jury Members:

Andrii Markovskiy, Member, UIA Architectural Education Commission (Ukraine) – R2 (UIA Representative)

- Alternate jurors will attend all jury meetings and participate in the discussions but will only vote if they replace a voting juror.

The international jury panel members will confirm that they abide by the rules of the UIA with respect to any conflict of interest.

Awards

Up to five (5) awards will be conferred. This includes one (1) certificate for one school/programme located within each of the 5 UIA Regions. The jury reserves the right not to award all the prizes if the entries fall short of the required standards. Announcement of an additional list of finalist commended entries for their distinctive qualities and merits is at the discretion of the jury.

Exhibition and Publication

Winners and selected entries will form part of the UIA Education Commission Exhibition at the 29th UIA World Congress in Barcelona, Spain, and may be part of other forms of UIA publications and exhibitions. The UIA Education Commission will develop a digital edited volume highlighting the merits and key innovative practices presented in the winning submissions, as well as those of the selected entries. The publication will comprise a best practices document for architectural education worldwide. Materials reproduced, published and/or exhibited by the UIA will recognise the corresponding school/programme, and will credit the copyright of all student authors and faculty advisors.

Awards Ceremony

Prizes for this third edition of the UIA Award for Innovation in Architectural Education will be conferred at the official awards ceremony of the 29th UIA World Congress of Architects in Barcelona, Spain (28 June – 2 July 2026).

Report

The Award management team (award manager and technical committee) will develop a report following the announcement of the results. The report will outline aspects of the process, lessons learned, and merits of the awarded entries.