



# **CELEBRATION OF ARCHITECTURE & Design Awards**

**OCTOBER 22, 2026**

# **CALL FOR SUB MISS IONS**



**Project Submission  
Guidelines, Eligibility,  
and Details about the  
Awards Ceremony**

# AIA MIDDLE TN DESIGN AWARDS

The AIA Middle TN Design Awards Program strives to recognize projects that represent the best of Middle Tennessee architecture; projects that are exemplary for their thoughtful, sustainable, innovative, and well-crafted design. With juries composed of highly-qualified professionals offering diverse perspectives and expertise, all submissions are reviewed in the context of the project team's goals and evaluated for thoughtfully designed resolution of those goals.

The jury's selections are announced at the annual Awards Celebration. Winning projects are promoted within the Middle TN community, cultivating an ongoing public interest in architectural excellence.

## SUBMISSION DEADLINE: FRIDAY, AUGUST 28, 5:00 PM

### DATES + DEADLINES

July 13, 2026 – Call for Entries Opens

July 31, 2026 – Early Bird Registration Ends

August 28, 2026, 5:00 PM – Final submission deadline. All submission requirements and payment(s) must be completed online by this deadline. No exceptions will be made.

October 22, 2026 – Celebration of Architecture

### HOW TO ENTER

Submitting your projects is a two-step process.

1. Register and pay for your entries. Good news! You can now register and pay for all of your entries in one transaction. [REGISTER HERE](#) or go to [aiamidtn.org](http://aiamidtn.org)
2. Once you have registered and paid for your entries, you will receive access to a separate submission form to provide your fully completed submission.

SUBMISSION FEES (NON-REFUNDABLE)      EARLY BIRD SUBMISSION ENDS JULY 31st

AIA Members: \$325  
Non Members: \$450

Early Bird Reg. Fee - AIA Members: \$275  
Early Bird Reg. Fee - Non Members: \$325

Payment shall be made online via the JotForm linked above (via PayPal or Credit/Debit).

### SUBMISSION ASSISTANCE

This Call for Entries contains full guidelines through the submission process.

For questions about submitting to the Awards, please refer first to the Call for Submissions and then contact [Lindsay@aiamidtn.org](mailto:Lindsay@aiamidtn.org).

# AWARD LEVELS + CEREMONY

Each project will be judged according to its own merit and how well it resolves the problem(s) addressed. Projects should also demonstrate the AIA national commitment to sustainability, resilience, and inclusivity as detailed in the [AIA Framework for Design Excellence](#). Projects will not be judged in competition but by measuring the architect's performance against each project's potential. Design Awards can be given in three degrees: Honor, Merit, and Citation. Honor Awards, the top honor, will be granted to built projects for overall design excellence. Merit Awards will be granted to built projects worthy of recognition because of their design quality. Citation Awards will be granted at the discretion of the jury. In addition, highlighting the importance of sustainable design, the jury may select award winners also to receive a commendation for sustainable design at their discretion.

**The AIA Middle TN Design Awards program recognizes the following levels of achievement:**

## **HONOR AWARD**

Project demonstrates the highest level of design, performance, and sustainability.

## **MERIT AWARD**

Project demonstrates exceptional design quality and performance.

## **CITATION AWARD**

Optional Awards given to projects deemed worthy of recognition.

## **EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABLE DESIGN**

All entries will be eligible to receive this award, which will be evaluated relative to the AIA/COTE Framework for Design Excellence.

The jury may elect to recognize projects that improve racial equity through impactful and thoughtful design.

## **Additional Awards**

### **PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD**

This award can be given in addition to awards of excellence, merit, or commendation.

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## **AWARDS CEREMONY**

Awards will be announced and presented to architects of winning projects at the annual Celebration of Architecture Design Awards on October 22, 2026.

# ELIGIBILITY

Projects must be submitted in the name of the firm that executed the commission. If that firm has been dissolved or its name has been changed, an individual or successor firm may enter projects under the name of the firm at the time the project was executed.

Multiple entries of the same project by successor individuals or firms will not be accepted. For projects that involve multiple buildings, the architect submitting the project (or a portion thereof) must designate authorship of each portion of the project. Firms are encouraged to submit previously submitted non-winning projects or ones that have won awards in other programs.

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## **PROJECT ELIGIBILITY**

Any registered architect may submit an original or collaborative project completed after July 1, 2022 and before September 1, 2026.

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## **SUBMITTER ELIGIBILITY**

Licensed AIA Middle TN architects may submit built projects located anywhere in the world.

AIA Architects licensed in other states and non-AIA members may only submit built projects located in Middle Tennessee.

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## **AWARD ELIGIBILITY**

Eligible for Honor, Merit, and Citation, Excellence in Sustainable Design and People's Choice Awards.

Projects that have received an AIA Middle TN award are not eligible for another award. Firms are encouraged to submit previously submitted non-winning projects or ones which have won awards in other programs.

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## FINE PRINT

AIA Middle TN reserves the right to disqualify entries or projects not submitted in accordance with the stated rules. AIA Middle TN is not responsible for errors in submissions. Submission of an entry is your authorization for AIA Middle TN to publish your project. Awarded projects may be submitted for publication by the AIA in professional journals and newspapers.

AIA Middle Tennessee is a 501(c)(6) Non-Profit Organization. Event fees, sponsorship, and other payments related to the programming/events are NOT tax deductible charitable contributions. However, your tax advisor should be consulted to determine whether payments related to the event may be deductible business expenses. We appreciate your support of this great event!

# CATEGORIES

AIA Middle TN welcomes submissions from a variety of project types; however, projects are not awarded based on categories. The checked box on the submission website will only be used within AIA Middle TN to organize projects for review and to gather information about the work submitted by its members. AIA Middle TN does not require an award to be given in every category, and relies on the collective expertise of the jurying process for winners to be selected. We reserve the right to audit the submission and reassign the selected category. AIA Middle TN invites projects of all types and sizes for review. Choose the category that best describes the submitted project.

	<b>BUILT</b>	<b>UNBUILT</b>
<b>CHOOSING A CATEGORY</b>	A building, related group of buildings, a renovated/ remodeled building or an interior design project.	Any exercise in architecture with the intent of actual construction (e.g. competition entries, architectural schemes not chosen by the client, or actual projects which have not completed construction.
<b>PURPOSE + RECOGNITION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The criteria for awards includes:</li> <li>• Innovation, originality and/or vision (design and/or construction methods)</li> <li>• Conceptual clarity</li> <li>• Contextual responsiveness</li> <li>• Thoughtful materialization (economy of means, material selection and detailing, craftsmanship)</li> <li>• Incorporation and communication of principles of sustainability</li> </ul>	<p>The criteria for awards includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation, originality and/or vision</li> <li>• Conceptual clarity</li> <li>• Contextual responsiveness</li> <li>• Thoughtful material visualization</li> <li>• Incorporation and communication of principles of sustainability</li> </ul>
<b>CATEGORIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small Project (25,000 sf or less)</li> <li>• Large Project (over 25,000 sf)</li> <li>• Healthcare</li> <li>• Interiors</li> <li>• Residential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unbuilt</li> </ul>

# SUBMISSION OVERVIEW

Every submission will be evaluated based on a written narrative, a collection of images, and the integration of principles from the Framework for Design Excellence. Further details are necessary for the publication and promotion of the Awards program. All competition materials must be correctly uploaded online before the designated deadline. Architects have the option to submit multiple projects.

**DO NOT SHOW ANY INDIVIDUAL'S NAME, THE FIRM'S NAME, OR ANY OTHER IDENTIFYING INFORMATION ON ANY SUBMISSION MATERIALS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE ENTRY FORM AND TEAM LIST.**

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE: THURSDAY, AUG 28, 5:00 PM**

## 1) NARRATIVE

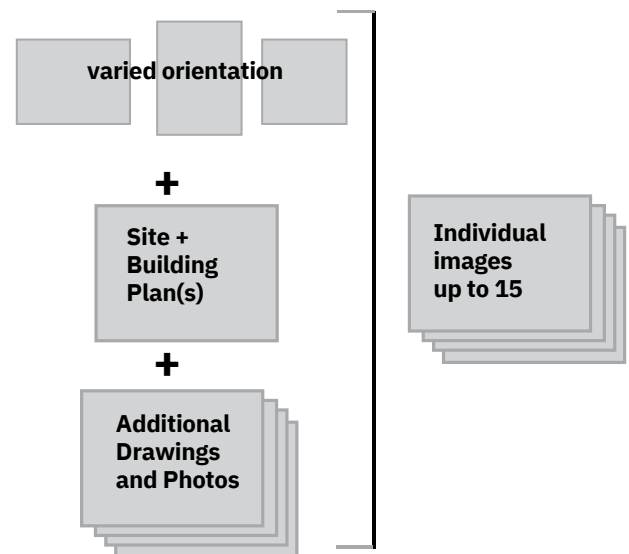
- 400 words limit
- Discuss critical issues such as site constraints, design and detail innovations, environmental considerations, context, and history.
- Tell the abbreviated story of the project.

## 2) FRAMEWORK FOR DESIGN EXCELLENCE

- Choose and elaborate on a minimum of 3 key principles from the Framework for Design Excellence that closely correspond to your project's design strategies.
- [Learn more about the Framework for Design Excellence >](#)

## 3) IMAGE COLLECTION

- Upload up to 15 images, up to 5MB each, that support your entry.
- Individual files may include more than one image.
- Include, as applicable, a Site Plan and Building Plan.
- Site Plan requirement does not apply to interior projects.
- Include the building plan(s) necessary to describe the building arrangement and envelope. If including section or elevation drawings, indicate their location on the plans.
- Additional drawings may include elevations, sections, wall sections, details, diagrams, or renderings.
- Include photos as required to adequately describe the site/building. If the project is a restoration or adaptive reuse project, include at least one image that describes conditions before work began.
- Graphic presentations shall not contain any sound, animation, video, interactive graphics, or links to other files.



## 5) IMAGE DIRECTORY + PHOTO CREDIT

- Include numbered directory for images + photo credit
- All images must have a photo credit and be cleared for use

# PHOTO RELEASE

## PHOTO RELEASE

The Owners and copyright holders of the photographs/images submitted to AIA Middle TN in connection with the 2026 AIA Middle TN Design Awards Program, hereby grant permission to the AIA Middle TN, to use and reproduce this material for the following purposes: Include photo credit for all photos.

1. For publicity to announce the awards and to educate the public about architectural design on AIAMIDTN.org.
2. Electronic images may be retained for the AIAMIDTN image library.

The AIA Middle TN will include credit and any notice of copyright on all electronic images that it publishes and will include this information with material distributed to other media. However, AIA Middle TN will not be responsible for the failure of other persons or media to identify this information in its/his/her publications. No royalties or other amounts shall be payable by AIA Middle TN for use of these materials.